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KUNWAR MOHAMMAD ASHRAF

AN INDIAN SCHOLAR AND REVOLUTIONARY

1903–1962

Edited
by
HORST KRÜGER

AKADEMIE-VERLAG · BERLIN
1966

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PREFACE

Humanity is witnessing the victorious freedom movement of the formerly enslaved colonial peoples of Asia and Africa during the last decades. Most of them have broken the chains intended to keep them in bondage for ever, and have successfully started to build up their own life. This process means that even some peoples who, generally speaking, were hitherto only the subject matter of foreign orientology, are now masters of their own destiny, and as academic facilities develop in their countries, radically change the character of orientology internationally. India, where a modern scientific tradition formed long ago, nevertheless has only enjoyed full freedom to develop her scholars since her political independence. She now plays a leading part in the re-shaping of modern orientology and will hasten the participation of those within her own boundaries who were formerly treated as backward and illiterate minorities and studied by others from outside.

The orientologists in the German Democratic Republic are aware of this fundamental change in the position of the peoples of Asia and Africa. Therefore while preserving the valuable scientific heritage of the past and continuing the humanistic traditions of classical German orientology, they concentrate at the same time more and more on studying problems of the modern history and culture of the peoples of Asia and Africa. Naturally the history of the national liberation struggle in these countries is one of the most important topics for orientologists in our country.

In the field of German indology this development was prepared historically over a long period but could only now be realized. Classical German indology, which emphasized the study of language, literature, philosophy and religion of ancient India, was founded at the beginning of the XIX century. Many important scientific achievements resulted, leading to the international esteem of German scholarship in this field. Apart from this development which dominated indological studies at German universities for about 150 years, a new trend of German indology began outside the universities in the middle of the XIX century. It was inaugurated by Karl Marx, who, taking the side of the Indian people, cleared the path for the study of the problems of modern India and especially of the national freedom struggle by his fundamental observations on past and contemporary India. These two trends of German indology have been amalgamated in this country, elevating indological studies to a new level.

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The research plans of the Institute for Oriental Studies in the German Academy of Sciences in Berlin are devised on the basis of this new approach to orientology. Accordingly great emphasis is laid on major scientific undertakings such as the *Egyptian Dictionary*, the *Hittite Thesaurus* or the *Chinese Dictionary*, to mention only a few.

In the field of historical research two main groups of problems are being studied here which call for the cooperation of many scholars. The first is a special problem of great historical significance which is not limited to the history of only one country but relates to most of the Asian and African peoples, i. e. the genesis and special features of the indigenous mode of production which, to distinguish it from the European development, may be termed the "Asiatic mode of production" (K. Marx). This is an important field in which results can only be achieved after careful and detailed research.

Another very complex branch of study conducted at the Institute for Oriental Studies concerns problems of the national liberation movements of the Asian and African peoples. In this context the general course of development has to be considered as well as local features and national peculiarities. Most interesting in this context is the rise and growth of the revolutionary wing within the national movement and its contact with socialist ideas which have been adopted and incorporated in various ways, thus preparing for transition from national liberation to the national-democratic revolution. To investigate the origins of this process and to study the different paths of transition, is a fascinating subject of research.

This line of study at the Institute for Oriental Studies, representing the general trend in the field of orientology in the German Democratic Republic, corresponds to the scientific conviction of the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf who was attracted by this basically new approach to orientology. Moreover, his special approach to problems of Indian history and culture had special value for us, for he embodied, both as a scholar and as a man, exactly the way of thinking that we are trying to put into practice in our work. To understand his scientific and political attitude we only need to look at the history of the Indian liberation movement in this century.

After a long and hard struggle for freedom the Indian people won political independence in 1947. This fight was decided by the active participation of the Indian masses. Indian history in the modern period shows us that whenever broad sections of the people have participated in the decisive battles for freedom and social progress, there has been an advance in the general development of the country. But only when the masses of India became conscious of their aims did they join the national liberation movement on a broad scale. Their vague aspirations for freedom and a better life were kindled and guided by national leaders who marched ahead to show the path by which to achieve the goal.

One of the most outstanding leaders in India during the last crucial decades in the battle for independence was the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf. He was a genuine patriot and a true internationalist. His fundamental studies of Indian history and his own experiences in the revolutionary movement made him understand the importance of the combination of the political and the social struggle. These ex-

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periences, combined with his profound studies of Marxism-Leninism, led him to the conclusion that only socialism could bring the fulfilment of the wishes and hopes of the Indian people. He will always be remembered for his consistent and continuous struggle against communalism and his exposure of its causes both internal and external. Because he worked and fought so consciously and out of a feeling of responsibility based on knowledge, the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf lives in our memory as the incarnation of the ideal type of an historian – the learned scholar combined with the ardent revolutionary.

Therefore whatever memorials are dedicated to the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf in India, we also felt an obligation to contribute our own. This commemoration volume is but a humble tribute to his memory from some of his friends and colleagues in India and abroad. It does not claim to be a substitute for a biography which can only be written later after careful research in India, Great Britain and elsewhere. A collection of his numerous speeches and articles on historical and current topics which have stirred the Indian masses and thus made history, should also be published.

I should like to thank all those who have contributed to this volume in spite of the long distances, many preoccupations and recent developments in India which created many difficulties that had to be overcome. It was not possible, however, to avoid a delay in publishing although we are happy to say that most of the promised papers were actually sent. It is gratifying to note how many people who did not share the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf's political opinions, nonetheless contributed to honour his memory. Among these was one whose name inevitably occurs frequently in the following pages, India's first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who in spite of declining health and the urgent responsibilities of the time sent a personal message for this volume shortly before his death so deeply mourned throughout the world by all lovers of international peace. It is given in facsimile on page 339. While we did our best to make known our intention of publishing a memorial volume and sent personal invitations to those of his old friends who were known to us, some whose addresses could not be traced may have been omitted.

I am very grateful to Mr. Junaid Ahmad, Junaid Printing Press, Bombay, for his kind permission to publish the translation of the chapter *Dr. K. M. Ashraf on Himself* from *Personalities and Incidents that influenced me* (Urdu), Bombay, pp. 37–59; to Mr. S. M. Agarwala, Managing Director, Kitab Mahal Private Ltd, Allahabad, for allowing us to publish the translation of the chapter *Kunwar Muhmed Ashraf* from the late Rahul Sankrityayan's *Naye bharat ke naye neta*, Allahabad, 1943, pp. 1–11; and to Dr. S. P. Sen, General Secretary of the Indian History Congress Association for allowing us to reprint Dr. K. M. Ashraf's *Presidential Address* delivered at the Indian History Congress, Aligarh, 1960.

It would be impossible to thank individually here all those friends and colleagues of the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf who have assisted both in India and in this country with the selecting, translating and editing of the materials, in addition to the cooperation and helpful suggestions from those whose names appear here as

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contributors. Mrs. P. M. Kemp-Ashraf is responsible for some of the translations as well as for reading the whole manuscript. Mrs. R. Koppe supervised the transcription of the Persian names and terms. Mrs. A. Lübcke from the technical staff of the Institute for Oriental Studies, has been untiring in rendering technical assistance. Mrs. G. Hertel prepared the index.

The authors speak for themselves. Their views expressed in this volume are not necessarily those of the editor. Statements or impressions about Dr. Ashraf's life and ideas appear as the writers have given them.

November 1964 H. K.

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HISTORY

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A Note on Administrative Statistics in Ancient India

K. A. Nilakanta Sastri

Students of ancient Indian polity know that the Great Epic, the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, and *Manusmrti* conserve many valuable data on administration in the ancient Indian state. There are often difficulties in detail in determining the chronology and the geographical location of many of these data which stand in the way of the historian making full use of them in his specific reconstructions. The *Arthaśāstra* lays down rules for the maintenance of statistics by officers in cities and villages bearing on land, movable wealth, cattle, industries, labour etc. calculated to help government in its work in peace and war. We have, however, no means of checking how far these prescriptions were carried out in practice; no records have survived which will enable us to elucidate this matter satisfactorily.

In the Great Epic attention has generally been given to the *Śānti Parva* and the long discourses of Bhiṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira on political and social institutions. But perhaps even more valuable to students of history are casual references which occur in the narrative of the story, and it is the aim of this note to draw attention to one passage which apparently provides a welcome peep into administrative practice of the ancient Indian state in one respect. It occurs in the *Vana-parva* in the description of Duryodhana's Ghoṣa-yātrā by which seems to be meant a tour of the country as against urban centres. My references are to the Kumbakonam edition of the epic. Duryodhana is reminded by an official at the outset that the time has come for taking a census of the cattle in the villages and for marking (branding?) the calves. The text is:

Ramaṇiyeṣu deśeṣu ghoṣās-samprati Kaurava
Smāraṇe samayaḥ prāpto vatsānāmapi cāṅkanam III. 240,4.

The commentary explains *smāraṇa as gavām saṁkhyāpurvakam vayorarṇajāti nāmnām lekhanam* i. e. the enumeration of cows and description of them in writing by age, colour, breed and name.

The next canto contains an account of the actual operations of the census of cattle carried out by the concerned officers:

paśyantaste tadā gāvaḥ śataśotha saharaśaḥ |
aṅkairlakṣaiśca tāḥ sarvāḥ lakṣayāmāsa parthivaḥ ||
aṅkayāmāsa vatsāmśca jayne-copasṛtāmstvapi |

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bālavatsāśca yā gāvaḥ kālayāmāsa tā api ‖
atha sa smāraṇam kṛtvā lakṣayitvā trihāyanān |
III 241. (4–6).

Freely rendered, the passage means that the king passed in review cattle by the hundreds and thousands and caused them to be marked by symbols (numbers?); he also numbered the calves, and identified those fit for taming, besides counting the cows with young calves. Finally he listed the three year old bulls.

In the rendering given above I have accepted the suggestions of the commentators regarding technical terms like *lakṣaiḥ*, *upasṛtān*, and *kālayāmsā*.

Censuses, statistics, and perhaps even planning are not apparently such very modern devices as we are apt to imagine.

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Some Problems of the Ancient Indian Republics

Walter Ruben

1. History and political importance of the topic

Since the times of the battles of Marathon and Salamis, the Greek writers, and later on the Romans and other Europeans, spread the onesided idea of the fundamental contrast between oriental despotism and occidental liberty. Under the impression of this long tradition, an official of the East India Company like Alexander Dow wrote in 1768 of the general despotism in India and Asia (with the exception of gentile-patriarchal feudal Arabs and Afghans)[1]. What he had observed in India was the feudal despotism of the Moghuls. Fifty years later, in 1818, James Mill claimed that Indian despotism followed the Asiatic model and condemned it as "a contrivance extremely simple and rude"[2]. Meanwhile the German philosopher, G. W. F. Hegel, taught his students, from 1822 on in a similar way that "in India the most arbitrary, the worst and most disgraceful despotism is at home", and worse than in other parts of Asia where despotism evokes at least the protest of the peoples[3].

But ancient Greek and Roman writers also recorded quite different observations made by Alexander the Great and his companions. They had witnessed in North-Western India some peoples who were not subject to kings or despots. At the time of A. Dow's above-mentioned book, it was the learned German historian J. F. Kleuker who stressed the point that in India in general the soil belonged to the king (according to Strabo) and that this was similar to Egyptian despotism, but that on the other hand, according to the Greeks, some Indians were free and not

[1] A. Dow, Esq., *Abhandlungen zur Erläuterung der Geschichte, Religion und Staatsverfassung von Hindostan*, aus dem Englischen übersetzt, Leipzig, 1773, I, pp. 65 sqq., added to his *Die Geschichte von Hindostan*, Leipzig, 1772/73 (*The History of Indostan*, London, 1768). Cf. W. Ruben, *Karl Marx über Indien (1853) und die Indienliteratur vor ihm*, Wiss. Ztschr. d. Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Ges.- u. sprachwiss. Reihe Nr. 2, Jg. III, 1953/54, p. 74; E. Windisch, *Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie und indischen Altertumskunde*, Straßburg, 1917, I, pp. 11sq.

[2] J. Mill, *The History of British India*, 2nd ed. London, 1820, I, p. 175 sq. Cf. *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. by C. H. Philips. London, 1961, p. 219. Mill was Utilitarian.

[3] G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, Leipzig, 1944, II, p. 369. Cf. W. Ruben, *Hegel über die Philosophie der Inder*, *Asiatica*, Leipzig, 1954, p. 563. Hegel's anti-Indian attitude is severely criticised by H. v. Glasenapp, *Das Indienbild deutscher Denker*, Stuttgart, 1960, pp. 39 sqq.

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subject to kings[4]. In 1830 another German scholar, P. von Bohlen, went a step further and declared that the Greeks mentioned some ancient Indian "democracies" and "free *(autonomoi)* states", namely the Arattas which meant *arāshtras*, states without kings, but that these were only exceptions which "the books in Sanskrit did not know or seemed to ignore"[5]. In 1847 Christian Lassen began to publish the most comprehensive German work of the 19th century about Ancient India, in which he also mentioned the Arattas and other kingless peoples in connection with Alexander's campaign[6]. In contrast to von Bohlen he knew some epic sources describing their kingless organisation[7].

On the other hand, it was the famous English indologist George Turnour who in 1838 published some translations of and commentaries to ancient Buddhist texts describing the life of Buddha and occasionally referring to the state of the Licchavis with their type of aristocracy[8]. But because he mentioned their *rājas* and *uparājas* C. Lassen could not reconcile Turner's description of the Licchavis with the ancient Greek fragments about the kingless states in northwestern India. He thought that the Licchavi state was unique[9]. In 1897 Richard Fick was perhaps the first to identify the "oligarchical constitutions" of the Licchavis, (for which he quoted Lassen) with that of the Śākyas (for which he quoted Oldenberg)[10] and that of the ancient Greeks, using especially Megasthenes. But he did not believe that these so-called "*poleis autonomoi*" were republics. He was of the opinion that in these states the relatives of the king participated in the government to such an extent that monarchy became oligarchy[11]. H. Oldenberg in 1881 had described the Śākyas as one of the small aristocratic states on the border of the big monarchies, their king being only the 'primus inter pares' among his fellow landowning aristocrats. The Śākyas reminded him of some Rajput families (described by Sleeman) who defended their independence successfully against neighbouring kings[12]. In the same year when Fick's book appeared H. Zimmer dealt with the question whether states of this republican type already existed in Vedic times; two years earlier in 1895 Foy had raised the same point; both were quoted by Fick.

Thus the field was prepared for T. W. Rhys Davids who in 1903 (and later again in 1922)[13] gave a great deal of material from Buddhist sources about what he

[4] *Holwells merkwürdige historische Nachrichten von Hindostan und Bengalen*, aus dem Englischen . . . mit Anmerkung von J. F. Kleuker, Leipzig, 1778, p. 601. Cf. Ruben (above note 1) p. 72.

[5] P. von Bohlen, *Das alte Indien*, Königsberg, 1830, II, p. 42.

[6] C. Lassen, *Indische Altertumskunde*, Leipzig, 1874, ed. II, p. 2, p. 166.

[7] Ibid. I (1867), p. 973.

[8] J. of the Asiatic Society of Bengal II (1838), p. 993 (quoted by Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 45). Cf. Windisch, loc. cit., p. 119.

[9] Lassen, loc. cit. II, p. 86.

[10] H. Oldenberg, *Buddha*, Berlin, 1881, p. 101.

[11] R. Fick, *Die sociale Gliederung im nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddhas Zeit*, Kiel, 1897, pp. 89 sq.

[12] H. Oldenberg, *Buddha*, 7th ed. 1920, pp. 116–118.

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called the ten "clans" or "republics" of Buddha's time, the Licchavis, Śākyas, Mallas etc. in the Ganges valley and "tribes" mentioned by Megasthenes as living in the Northwest. He made the remark that the contrast between monarchies and republics in ancient India reminded him "of the political situation at about the same period in Greece". Rhys Davids' as well as Oldenberg's conception was accepted by many scholars, such as L. de La Vallée Poussin, who called the Licchavis a "clan féodal ou, comme dit Rhys Davids, républicain"[14], and spoke with Oldenberg of the 'primus inter pares' among the Śākyas, "these Rājputs" of Oldenberg[15]. Rhys Davids especially, since he wrote in English, became important for Indian historians in constrast to the Germans.

First of all K. P. Jayaswal, under the influence of T. W. Rhys Davids, from 1912 on stressed the importance of the topic of the ancient Indian republics. It was the time when Indian modern life was developing, when in connection with the movement for swadeshi and swaraj, terrorism swept over India, when in December 1912 the life of the Viceroy, Lord Harding, was threatened[16], when Lokamanya Tilak had just finished writing his famous *Gītārahasya* in prison in Mandalay, when the colonial government in 1911 had been forced to reunite Bengal which had been partitioned in 1905[17], while, on the other hand, the Congress, not yet led by Gandhi, reiterated older objections and suggestions, and complained about the non-removal of defects mentioned in previous resolutions[18]. Yet this was only three years after R. Shama Shastri had published the text of the *Arthaśāstra* in 1909.

K. P. Jayaswal dedicated his book "to the memory of the republican Vṛishṇis, Kathas, Vaiśalas and Śākyas who announced philosophies of freedom from *devas*, death, cruelty and caste". But he said that he wrote his book in order to propagate the future independent Indian Republic. He gave it the subtitle of "*A constitutional history of India in Hindu times*", and spoke only in very vague terms about the reformation of Hindu society, about the glory of the constitutional progress made by the Hindus and about the Golden Age of India that lay in the future, not in the past[19]. He dealt not only with the ancient Indian republics but with the monarchies as well in order to show their non-despotic features. Nevertheless he wrote as a liberal patriot, and none of the Indian and foreign historians of India could avoid taking Jayaswal's material and arguments into consideration.

[13] *Buddhist India*, London, 1903; *Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1922; I, pp. 174 sqq.

[14] L. de La Vallée Poussin, *Indo-européens et Indo-iraniens, L'Inde jusque vers 300 a. J.-C.*, Paris, 1936, nouvelle édition, p. 231.

[15] Ibid., p. 226.

[16] G. Haldar, *Revolutionary Terrorism*, in: *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, ed. by A. Gupta, Jadavpur, 1958, p. 244.

[17] This was a success of the boycott movement from 1906 to 1911 (R. P. Dutt, *Indien heute und morgen*, Berlin, 1958, p. 151).

[18] P. Sitaramaya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, I, Bombay, 1946, p. 27).

[19] K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, 3rd ed., Bangalore, 1955, pp. 352 sq.

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The standpoint of the historians differs according to their political ideas. Thus Jayaswal in 1961 was criticised by R. C. Majumdar for his "extravagant claims" because he "sought to prove that not only a constitutional form of Government, but the entire parliamentary system, including the Address to the Throne and Voting of Grants, was prevalent in ancient India"[20]. Similar objections, which are to a certain extent true, had been raised already by B. K. Sarkar in 1922[21] who did not want to see the importance of ancient Indian democratic traditions overstressed, fearing the "spiritual conquest of Asia by Eur-America, from Washington and Adam Smith to Karl Marx and Lenin"[22].

On the other hand, one can easily understand that a colonialist historian like Vincent A. Smith in 1904 did less than justice to the ancient Indian anti-despotic tradition. In his comprehensive *Early History of India* he mentioned the Licchavis and Śākyas as clans without describing their interesting type of government[23]. He spoke of the "independent tribes" like the Kathaioi etc., conquered by Alexander, and of the "clans of brave agriculturists, enjoying an admirable system of aristocratic government" beyond the Hyphasis (Beas)[24]. He also characterised the Yaudheyas and Mādrakas, the successors of the Kathaioi etc. in the Gupta-period as "tribal republics"[25]. But he did not make clear whether he wanted to hint at some kind of political evolution when he used the terms clan, tribe and tribal republic in this connection, neither did he stress the importance of these non-monarchical states for the development of Ancient India. K. P. Jayaswal in later editions of his book had to criticise the opinion of Smith that such tribes were of Tibetan descent[26] and were frontier states of the Gupta empire[27], since both of these ideas suggested that the Indian states proper had been purely monarchical.

Étienne Lamotte, the well-known Belgian buddhologist, writing in 1958, was even briefer on the "republican states" as he called the Licchavis, Śākyas etc. of Buddha's time, only mentioning that Buddha was inspired to organise his monks along the lines of these republics[28].

The German buddhologist E. Waldschmidt in 1950 described the Śākyas and Licchavis, as well as the peoples of the Northwest in Alexander's time, as small, aristocratic free states, and at the same time clans of warriors with oligarchical forms of government, going into much more detail then Lamotte[29]. He added in a completely abstract way that states in ancient India "begin and decay; the different forms of states: monarchy, aristocracy, republic follow each other; the

[20] Philips (cf. above note 2), p. 423.
[21] B. K. Sarkar, *The Political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus*, Leipzig, 1922, p. 150.
[22] Ibid., p. 154.
[23] V. A. Smith, *The Early History of India*, Oxford, 1904, p. 26, pp. 30 sq.
[24] Ibid., pp. 64 sq., pp. 86 sq. [25] Ibid., p. 250.
[26] K. P. Jayaswal, loc. cit., pp. 170 sqq. [27] Ibid., p. 159.
[28] É. Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, Louvain, 1958, pp. 10 sq.
[29] E. Waldschmidt, *Geschichte des indischen Altertums* (Bruckmanns Weltgeschichte, Geschichte Asiens, München, 1950), pp. 28 sq., p. 43.

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struggle for power begins"[30]. Such a remark, by the way, does not make it sufficiently clear whether Waldschmidt wants to distinguish between aristocracies and republics or how, nor does it suggest to the reader the importance or the character of the struggle between monarchical and non-monarchical states in ancient India. On the contrary, one is given the false impression that such struggle is something natural. Four years later, Waldschmidt described the Śākyas as "the free state governed by the aristocratic association of clans of Śākyas" under the 'primus inter pares', the president of the assembly of the aristocratic leading ranks[31]. Similarly he described the Licchavis and interpreted their thousands of "rājans" as "barons" who had their manorial estates and their bodies of retainers[32], just as if the society of ancient India in Buddha's time bore a feudal character.

In their main outlines there are two different interpretations of the so-called *gaṇas* or *saṃghas*, one as tribes or clans, the other as republics; the first meaning a gentile society of quite archaic type, typical for prehistoric times; the second a state characteristic of historic times. Bhandarkar in 1913 spoke of the Mālava tribe; Fleet in 1915 used the same translation for *gaṇa*. But Thomas criticised Fleet and followed Jayaswal who saw in the *ganas* not a gentile but a political institution, as Thomas wrote. However, he interpreted *gaṇa* – curiously enough -- not as "republic" but as "governing body" or "senate"[33] of the tribe, rightly distinguishing between the masses of the people and the ruling body. It seems that R. C. Majumdar in 1919 was of a similar opinion, dealing with *gaṇa* as "corporate life"[34]. But Malalasekara in 1937/38 accepted Jayaswal's interpretation of the *gaṇas* as republics, probably with a leader elected from time to time, and Kane in 1946 and Agrawala in 1953 followed the same line[35].

S. A. Dange in 1942/43 was right in stressing the point that already in the period of occupation of the Ganges valley by the Vedic peoples, their stage of gentile tribes had passed away. They changed over to "military democracies" and aristocracies, giving up classless society and forming states for the protection and the development of private property. But according to Dange strong states of slaveholders were then only slowly developing (he may be thinking of Magadha in Buddha's time), and therefore some *gaṇa-saṃghas* continued until they were later on swallowed up by monarchies. In this connection he does not translate the term *gaṇa*, but he speaks of *gaṇas* which in the time of Alexander still lived in the happy condition of a primitive communist stage, although one would not have expected that[36].

[30] Ibid., p. 18.

[31] E. Waldschmidt, *Indien in vedischer und frühbuddhistischer Zeit*, Historia Mundi, Berlin, 1954, p. 544.

[32] Ibid., p. 547.

[33] D. Chattopadhyaya, *Lokāyata*, New Delhi, 1959, p. 153.

[34] Ibid., p. 468.

[35] Ibid., p. 471 about Malalasekara. – P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* III, Poona, 1946, p. 87. – V. S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini*, Lucknow, 1953, pp. 424 sqq.

[36] S. A. Dange, *India from primitive Communism to Slavery*, New Delhi, 1955 (3rd. ed.), pp. 147 sq.

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In contrast to Dange, B. C. Law, who had studied the *gaṇas* for several decades, wrote the relevant chapter in the second volume of the 'History and Culture of the Indian People', calling them "autonomous clans with a non-monarchical (republican or oligarchical) form of government", or shorter, "republicans"[37], hinting at the same time at the similar political development in Greece. Further R. C. Majumdar, also a veteran in the discussion of this problem, added in the same volume the interpretation of the *gaṇas* as aristocracies[38], reminding the reader of the "strong resemblance to the Cleisthenian constitution of Athens", insofar as according to his opinion "the Licchavi State was divided into a number of small administrative units, the heads of which composed the supreme assembly at the centre" (i. a. the 7707 *rājas*). These units, he believes, were local, no longer gentile, as were the units in Cleisthenes' constitution[39]. He gives no proof however for this interpretation.

In 1954 A. L. Basham wrote on "Oligarchies and Republics" taking "republic" as a broader term than "oligarchy", and ending this chapter with the reasonable judgement that "modern India may take legitimate pride in the fact that, though she may not have had democracies in the modern sense, government by discussion was by no means unknown in her ancient civilization"[40].

In the following year A. S. Altekar[41] also dealt with the *gaṇas* as republics, full of the pride which was alluded to by Basham and acknowledged for the first time by K. P. Jayaswal. But Altekar was no uncritical follower of Jayaswal.

In 1956 D. D. Kosambi preferred the concept of tribes as the organisations opposed to kingdoms in ancient India[42], and he distinguished between four kinds of tribes: 1. those which did not speak an Aryan language; 2. those that preserved their own language but already had contact with Aryans; 3. Aryans constituting an oligarchy which exploited *Śūdra* helots[43]; and 4. the brahmanised tribes under chiefs who had virtually absolute power (kingdoms)[44]. Kosambi did not touch on the importance of democratic tradition or an analogy with Greece.

In 1957 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri gave a much fuller account of the "republics" mainly following the views of Jayaswal[45], although he also speaks of them once as "tribes"[46].

[37] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, ed. by K. M. Munshi, Bombay, 1951, pp. 2 sq.
[38] Ibid., p. 17.
[39] Ibid., p. 332.
[40] A. L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, London, 1954, pp. 96 sqq.
[41] A. S. Altekar, *State and Government in Ancient India*, Banaras, 1955, pp. 99–128, chapter VI: Republics.
[42] D. D. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, Bombay, 1956, p. 135 nr. 6,2: tribes and kingdoms.
[43] Ibid., p. 143: e. g. the Mallas.
[44] Ibid., pp. 140 sq.
[45] *A Comprehensive History of India*, vol. II, ed by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, Bombay-Calcutta-Madras, 1957, pp. 116 sqq.
[46] Ibid., p. 131.

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On the other hand, in 1959 Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, following Dange and Kosambi, treated the *gaṇas* as tribes, criticising Jayaswal with arguments which do not seem quite convincing[47]. He writes that the "ultra-democratic *gaṇas* were but tribal societies, or, as in later literatures, only the more or less degenerate forms of these"[48].

In 1961 R. Thapar dealt briefly with the "tribal republics", in the sense of Jayaswal, which she thought were, according to the *Arthaśāstra*, partly governed by titular *rājas*[49]. But she also speaks of "tribes with an oligarchical system of government"[50] and of the "independent towns" of the Greek authors, interpreting this as based on a misunderstanding, in so far as in the Panjab in Alexander's time there were some towns "where neither the king nor any important representative of the king was in residence" and which therefore looked to the Greeks like 'independent towns'[51].

This survey, which contains the names of some of the most famous historians of India, is by no means complete, but is sufficient to illustrate how important it is to try to bring the problems of the ancient Indian *saṃghas* a step nearer solution.

The quantity and quality of the sources at our disposal are not yet sufficient for us to appreciate the historical reality of the ancient North-Indian monarchical and non-monarchical states. But we can, I think, distinguish between two social tendencies which resulted in kingdoms and aristocracies from the time of Buddha to that of the Guptas. According to a *Jaina-Sūtra* there were six different types of non-monarchical states[52], but the *Arthaśāstra* deals with only two types. During the millennium from circa 600 B. C. to 400 A. D., the form of government of several of these states must have changed considerably under influences both from within and without. But a detailed history for the moment being impossible, only some problems will be dealt with here.

2. The relation between Brahmins and Kṣatriyas

Since C. Lassen in 1847 analysed the account of the fight between Paraśurāma and Arjuna Kārttavīrya and between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, when the mythological kings took cows by force from Brahmins[53], and since R. Garbe in 1903 stressed the importance of Kṣatriyas like Buddha and Kṛṣṇa for the history of Indian religion, as Kṣatriyas whose wisdom surpassed, according to Garbe[54], that

[47] D. Chattopadhyaya (cf. note 33 above), pp. 153 sqq.
[48] Ibid., p. 154.
[49] R. Thapar, *Aśoka and the decline of the Mauryas*, Oxford University Press, 1961, pp. 94 sq.
[50] Ibid., p. 121. [51] Ibid., p. 122.
[52] *Āyārangasutta* II, 3, 1, 10, quoted by Jayaswal, loc. cit., p. 84.
[53] C. Lassen loc cit. (note 6 above) I, pp. 705 sqq., pp. 712 sqq.
[54] R. Garbe, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen oder des Kriegers?* in his book: *Beiträge zur indischen Kulturgeschichte*, Berlin, 1903, pp. 1 sqq.

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of the Brahmins of their time and environment, the significance of this struggle of the two highest *varṇas* is, little by little, becoming clearer. Kṛṣṇa belonged to the *saṃgha* of the Vṛṣṇis; Buddha to the Śākyas. Among the Śākyas, in contrast to the kingdoms, the Brahmins were not recognised as the first *varṇa*. This is made abundantly clear in the famous third *Sūtra* of the *Dīghanikāya* which describes the position of the proud Brahmin, Ambattha, who was despised by the Śākya Kṣatriyas[55]. Among the Vṛṣṇis, the Brahmins played no rôle in the biography of Kṛṣṇa. His heroic deeds were meant to protect his people, especially the herdsmen in the forests around Mathurā against demons, quite in contrast to the deeds of Rāma who protected brahmanical ascetics against demons in the South Indian forests and the adventures of Yudhiṣṭhira who migrated from Brahmin to Brahmin during his long tour through the forests of Northern India[56]. The only Brahmin of any importance in Kṛṣṇa' s life was his teacher Sandīpani who lived in Benares and not among the Vṛṣṇi *saṃgha*. Similarly, Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, was a Kṣatriya of the Licchavi *saṃgha* and not a Brahmin. Thus these three famous reformers and founders of anti-orthodox, anti-vedic and in this sense anti-brahmanical religions, were Kṣatriyas, originating from *saṃghas*.

On the other hand, Brahmins since the times of the Brāhmaṇas were regarded as indispensible for kings. At least some Brahmins claimed with *Aitareyabrāhmaṇa* (VIII, 24) that the gods would not accept the offerings of a king himself; he therefore needed a Brahmin as his *purohita*[57]. A Brahmin had to anoint a Kṣatriya king, and king and *purohita* were related by ritual with one another like husband and wife. Brahmins also played some rôle among the *saṃghas*, but when it was described in Buddhist texts how the Licchavi kings had their *uparāja* (heir apparent), *senāpati* (general) and *bhaṇḍāgārika* (treasurer), no *purohita* was included in the list. Brahmins were the power which restricted despotic tendencies in ancient Indian kings, because Brahmins were the preservers and interpreters of *dharma* which according to brahmanical tradition stood higher even than kings. But Brahmins in their books about *dharma* did not even mention *saṃghas*; on the contrary, they assured their readers and disciples again and again that states without a king decayed. Thus Brahmins became the ideologists of the ancient Indian kingdom in contrast to Buddha, Mahāvīra and Kṛṣṇa, the ideologists of the *saṃghas*. Of course, there were differences among brahmanical authors. The political importance of the Brahmin as the decisive adviser of the king in Manu's *Dharmaśāstra* is greater than that of the *purohita* in Kauṭalya's *Arthaśāstra*. But even Kauṭalya, being a Brahmin himself and one of the most convinced ideologists of monarchy, teaches that the *purohita*, the *ṛtvig* and *ācārya* should receive the highest salary equal to that of the *senāpati*, the *yuvarāja*, the queen mother and the queen[58]; and he advises the king to give *brahmadeyas* to these priests and to some other *śrotriyas*[59] (incidentally not to Kṣatriyas, see below).

[55] Quoted by Oldenberg (cf. note 12 above), p. 117; cf. Jayaswal, loc cit., p. 44.
[56] W. Ruben, *Waldabenteuer des indischen epischen Helden*, Berlin, 1962, pp. 35 sqq.
[57] W. Ruben, *Beginn der Philosophie in Indien*, Berlin, 1955, pp. 45 sq.
[58] *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, ed. J. Jolly, Lahore, 1923, pra. 91,4.

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Since the times of the oldest *Upaniṣads*, since Jānaśruti gave a village to the Brahmin Raikva according to *Chāndogyopaniṣad* (IV 2, 4), and since King Janaka offered his people and himself to Yājnavalkya in *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* (IV 2, 4), in other words, ever since the ancient Indian monarchy began to develop, these "gifts to Brahmins" were usual. By them the Brahmin obtained directly from the peasants the annual part of the harvest which the peasants of the village originally had had to deliver to the king's storehouse. This was more profitable for the Brahmin than to wait for occasional gifts which the king might now and then bestow from the same storehouse filled by the peasants of his kingdom.

The ancient Indian Brahmins in general preferred villages to towns, partly, perhaps, because as village priests and thanks to such *brahmadeyas* they had close contact with the villagers and lived on these poor, illiterate people, who believed in the magic of the Brahmin and in the *dharma*, the spiritual heritage of the monarchical Brahmins which contained some anti-despotic and therefore popular elements. On the other hand, Buddhists and Jainas generally preferred towns to villages, although for what reason we do not yet know.

We also do not yet know enough about ancient India in general, nor about the distinction to be made between Brahmins and Kṣatriyas and their respective rôles in *saṃghas* and kingdoms such as is hinted at by the scanty material summarized above. For instance it is at the present time impossible to decide whether or not Brahmins were given *brahmadeyas* in *saṃghas*, and if they were, whether in the same quantity as in kingdoms. We can only state that there were two opposite tendencies, which, to one degree or another, here and there appeared in the two types of ancient Indian states, monarchical and non-monarchical.

3. The relation between the king and Kṣatriyas

In the different kingdoms the position of the king was more or less despotic. In the *saṃghas* the differences among their respective kings and their rôles were even more complicated. King Suddhodana, the father of Buddha, is nowadays regarded only as a 'primus inter pares'; and there was in Buddha's time also the king of the Śākyas, Bhaddaya. But how these two kings stood in relation to each other is not yet certain[60]. The Śākyas, presumably the adult male Śākya Kṣatriyas, gathered in the assembly house *(samsthāgāra)* in Kapilavastu, the capital, under a president *(mahānāman)* to discuss and decide political questions[61]. The rôle of the "king" in such meetings is not described in the old texts. The Brahmin Ambattha (see above) was laughed at by the Śākyas and their sons in the same assembly house. This late assembly of Kṣatriyas has been connected by historians with archaic assemblies of tribesmen in Ṛgvedic times; and the fact that in *saṃghas*

[59] Ibid., pra. 19.8.
[60] Altekar, loc. cit., pp. 112 sq. — B. Breloer, *Die Śākyas*, ZDMG 94, 1940, p. 287.
[61] Breloer, loc. cit., p. 285.

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not all the freemen of a tribe but only Kṣatriyas met is important, and corresponds to the general development from tribe to state which had been taking place meanwhile. But even thus the *saṃghas* with this assembly of gentile aristocracy preserved certain democratic features in contrast to the kingdoms of that time.

Kṛṣṇa was not the king of his *saṃgha*; Kaṃsa and Ugrasena are mentioned as such in his lifetime[62]. But Kṛṣṇa is called in the *Mahābhārata*, *gaṇamukhya* (head) of the Vṛṣṇis, their *īśvara* and *guru*[63], bearing a heavy burden (that of leading the Vṛṣṇis). He is responsible for the welfare of the Vṛṣṇis'; they depend on him[64]. Described in these terms his position looks similar to that of a king. But in the same part of the epic he complains of his weak position among the Vṛṣṇis. Although he looks like the *īśvara*, he is in reality the slave of his relatives; he receives only half of what he should receive (whatever that means) and has to accept their insults[65]. Strength is always associated with his brother Saṃkarṣaṇa (not with Kṛṣṇa); delicacy with his brother Gada; and his son Pradyumna is proud of his beauty. Thus Kṛṣṇa has no companion, and the other powerful Vṛṣṇis are dangerous to approach. There were two mighty rival Vṛṣṇis in particular, Akrūra and Ahuka, who fought one another. Kṛṣṇa, standing between them, wished for the victory of one without the defeat of the other. He asked Nārada for advice, and this wise mythological Brahmin answered that he, Kṛṣṇa, was responsible for the internal struggle among the Vṛṣṇis[66]. Nārada recommended that Kṛṣṇa should use the weapon of always feeding his relatives as well as he could, the weapon of self-restraint, of honesty, of honouring everybody according to his merits, and of sweet speech which appeases the heart, mind and speech of his opponents. Kṛṣṇa, the responsible leader of the *gaṇa*, should use intelligence and patience, self-control and openhandedness to avoid a rupture in the *gaṇa*, because dissension would lead to its destruction.

This rare chapter, written by a man who was in favour of *gaṇas*, explained their main difficulty, namely that they were always threatened by dissension among the member- Kṣatriyas because they were not united under the leadership of a king as the Kṣatriyas of kingdoms were. Hence he advised the leader of the *gaṇa* to use kindness and tolerance, since he had not the power to unite the nobility by other means (see below) as kings did. The author wants to show that even the hero and god Kṛṣṇa, not to mention an average human *gaṇamukhya*, was helpless when confronted with a struggle among his own relatives. To him a successful *gaṇa* seemed an unattainable ideal. Thus a Brahmin like Nārada had to give the only possible advice, namely, that a leader had to behave in a democratic manner in direct contrast to a despot.

[62] W. Ruben, *Krishna*, Istanbul, 1943, p. 131.
[63] *Mahābhārata* (crit. ed. Poona) XII, 82, ślokas 25,5 and 31.
[64] Ibid. ślokas 23, 25 and 29.
[65] Ibid. śloka 5.
[66] Ibid. ślokas 14–17, which are difficult to understand, although Jayaswal, loc. cit., pp. 358 sq. has tried to translate them. Cf. Ruben (above note 62), p. 31 sq. about fighting in Kṛṣṇa's family. As regards Pradyumna's beauty cf. below note 79.

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In another passage of the epic[67] full of sympathy for *gaṇas*, the Kṣatriya Bhīṣma warns the reader against the greed of the *rājā* [of the *gaṇa*], because if he does not give liberally, the *gaṇa* will become impatient, and the greed of the one and the impatience of the others will bring both to a bitter end, to the disruption of the *gaṇa* and to its destruction; for enemies will easily destroy a disunited *gaṇa*. Wise men who listen to one another should lead the *gaṇa*. When the *gaṇas* restrain, sons and brothers they prosper. But when in the joint families or dynasties of the Kṣatriyas fighting starts and experienced men take no notice, the families will perish as well as the *gaṇa*. This is the danger from within [the *gaṇa*], where all (Kṣatriyas) are equal by birth and by nobility. But in exertion, intelligence, beauty and wealth they are not equal. Therefore *gaṇas* can be split by enemies, by causing dissension and by bribes. Wise heroes should become the leaders of the *gaṇa*; they alone should be members of the council, and not all the members of the *gaṇa*; only a few can guard its secrets. One easily recognises the same features of liberality, struggles within the families and the leadership of tolerant, wise men that appear in the previous chapter of the epic.

In both chapters kings of the *gaṇas* are mentioned but without any details as to their position. As regards the Vṛṣṇis, the Arthaśāstra expressly calls them a *saṃgha*[68], but the brahmanical tradition of Kṛṣṇa does not. It seems that the Brahmin editors of the *Harivaṃśa* and *Brahmapurāṇa* (being like the Brahmins in general in favour of monarchy) eliminated all allusions to this form of government among the Vṛṣṇis which may have existed in the older Kṛṣṇa-saga. In the *Brahmapurāṇa* it is only mentioned that when Kṛṣṇa had killed the devilish despot Kaṃsa he freed Ugrasena from imprisonment and anointed him in his own kingdom[69]. This is supposed to mean that Kaṃsa had dethroned and imprisoned his own father Ugrasena, and that Kṛṣṇa restored Ugrasena to his kingdom after killing the despotic usurper Kaṃsa, who had also imprisoned Kṛṣṇa's father and mother. Thus Kṛṣṇa was an idealised slayer of despots, just as one might expect of the hero of a *saṃgha*.

During Kṛṣṇa's lifetime there must have been fierce struggles in his *saṃgha*, as he complained in the above quoted chapter of the *Mahābhārata*; according to this epic, at the end of Kṛṣṇa's life the Vṛṣṇis simply killed one another down to the last man — a terrible example of dissension[70].

The motif that Kṛṣṇa did not become king of his *saṃgha* needed some mythological explanation, or so the Brahmin editors of the epic thought, and they related that Yayāti had once cursed the Yādavas (Kṛṣṇa's family) that they might never become kings[71]. Thus Kṛṣṇa made Ugrasena king (see above) but later on must have thought better of it. When he felt helpless on account of the intrigues

[67] Mbh. XII, 108 crit. ed. Poona.
[68] *Arthaśāstra* (cf. note 58) pra. 3, 13.
[69] *Brahmapurāṇa* 194, 9; not so in Harivaṃśa.
[70] It is also to be remembered that Kṛṣṇa fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas, but his army on that of the Kauravas.
[71] W. Ruben (above note 62), pp. 26 and 132.

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of his relatives, he must have thought of taking the king's power for himself instead of being only the *gaṇamukhya*. In this difficult situation Nārada advised him: The kingdom which one has got by his own power, one (i. e. Kṛṣṇa) has delivered to somebody else (i. e. to Ugrasena), may be for some special purpose or out of love for him or out of abhorrence of his enemies; this kingdom now has taken roots (in Ugrasena) and can by no means be taken back from him and Babhru (?), especially not by Kṛṣṇa, if he wants not to disunite the relatives[72].

In the *Harivaṃśa*[73] another version is given. Kṛṣṇa, having slain Kaṃsa and now staying in the house of his father, feels regret and thinks of consoling the widows of Kaṃsa, the townspeople and the guilds (?) of Mathurā. Then Ugrasena leads the Yadus into (Rāma's house) and declares in the gathering of the Yadus[74] that Kṛṣṇa has restored the family of the Yadus, that the people, the twice-born, the ministers and the army are his and also the treasure, the cereals, the jewels and clothes which will be wanted by the people employed by Kṛṣṇa. Ugrasena wants to go as an ascetic into the forest. But Kṛṣṇa rejects his offer, because he did not kill Kaṃsa in order to become king himself. He is not interested in becoming king; he transfers the kingdom to Ugrasena and consecrates him on the spot.

Instead of this meeting of only the Yadu family (or clan) one expects a meeting of the whole Vṛṣṇi *saṃgha*; not merely a dialogue between Ugrasena and Kṛṣṇa but a discussion among all the nobles of the *saṃgha*, which should be held in the *samsthāgāra* (see above about the Śākyas) instead of in the house of Kṛṣṇa or his father. In the brahmanical tradition of Kṛṣṇa no democratic procedure has been described such as is preserved in that of Rāma, the other *avatāra* of Viṣṇu and slayer of the despot Rāvaṇa, when he was elected heir-apparent.

Rāma's father, king Daśaratha, when he became old, wanted Rāma as his successor, and the Brahmins, the leaders of the army, the people of the town of Ayodhyā and of the villages felt what Daśaratha wanted. They gathered, discussed, came to an unanimous agreement and proposed to the king that Rāma should be enthroned as heir-apparent[75]. In the actual versions of the epic this procedure has been greatly enlarged. Here Daśaratha first comes to a decision with his councillors. Then the king invites the princes of several towns and countries to a splendid gathering and tells them that he has grown old and wants his son Rāma to become heir-apparent. They applaud him, and then only the Brahmins etc. (see above) gather, which does not seem very logical[76]. At all events, this assembly of all the people of Ayodhyā for the election of the heir-apparent would have been much more democratic than the assembly of the Yadus in Kṛṣṇa's case, if only we could trust the epic tradition. It is not likely that in the period of the centuries

[72] Mbh. XII. 15–17.

[73] *Harivaṃśa*, *Vishnuparva* 32, 16 sqq.

[74] *Yadusaṃsadi*: ibid. 17.

[75] W. Ruben, *Studien zur Textgeschichte des Rāmāyaṇa*, Stuttgart, 1936, p. 215, śl. 16.

[76] W. Ruben, *Das Pañcatantra und seine Morallehre*, Berlin, 1959, p. 249; cf. D. Chattopadhyaya (note 33 above), p. 601.

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around the beginning of the Christian era when the epic acquired its present form, such an election of a king was practised, especially not in a kingdom; and nobody claims that Rāma belonged to a *gaṇa*. This election of Rāma looks, therefore, like a romantic idealisation of an old custom which had already nearly disappeared in Ṛgvedic times[77], when among the Vedic tribes towns did not yet exist and such assemblies as depicted in the *Rāmāyaṇa* were impossible. They may have occurred in *saṃghas*.

Some kind of election of kings, it would seem, was practised also in later times. According to Strabo, Onesicritus stated that the Kathayans in North-West India, apparently a kind of *saṃgha*, elected the handsomest man among them as their king[78]. In this connection one should not overlook the fact that Pradyumna boasted of his beauty (cfr. above) and that Daśaratha and the assembled people wanted Rāma to become king, among other reasons because he looked as lovely as the moon and had a beautiful body, nice eyebrows and long eyes[79]. Of the Kathayans, Arrian and Curtius tell us that they defended their town against enemies from behind their waggons[80]. Before the city, on a low hill, they lay encamped behind their waggons, which, by encircling the hill in three rows, protected their camp with a triple barricade[81]. This reminds us of very ancient Aryan customs and of the herdsmen of the Vṛṣṇi *saṃgha* in the Kṛṣṇa-epic who nomadized with their carts drawn by bulls; when they reached a place in the forest where they wanted to stay for some time, they arranged the carts like a crescent[82]. The Kathayans of the time of Alexander may therefore have preserved and developed some archaic features similar to such strongholds of carts and the election of kings

In the actual description of Rāma's election it is said that king Daśaratha invited other kings (see above)[83]. These kings must be regarded as Kṣatriyas of his kingdom, because foreign kings could not have a vote in the election of the heir-apparent of Ayodhyā. This terminology is surprising in the case of a kingdom. It seems that the poet, who in his epic revived the ancient custom of the king's election, was eager to depict the king of Ayodhyā as a 'primus inter pares', not as a despot. But he went on to describe him as a despot, who shortly after cared no more for the decision of the assembly but under the influence of his favourite wife, Kaikeyī, decided entirely alone to anoint his second son Bharata as heir-apparent. This, according to the poet, was the sin which caused the death of the king and

[77] Jayaswal, loc. cit., p. 12.

[78] Nilakanta, Sastri, loc. cit., p. 124 according to Strabo. Cf. Jayaswal, p. 69.

[79] W. Ruben (note 75 above), pp. 207 sqq. śl. 8*, 57*, 9*, 64*. Cfr. note 66.

[80] Jayaswal, loc. cit., p. 69; Nilakanta Sastri, loc. cit., p. 124.

[81] J. W. McCrindle, *The Invasion of India of Alexander the Great*, Westminster, 1896, p. 116.

[82] W. Rau, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien*, Wiesbaden, 1957, p. 54, about nomadising Aryans. — *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* X, p. 11, p. 35; W. Ruben, *Eisenschmiede und Dämonen in Indien*, Leiden, 1939, p. 184.

[83] W. Ruben (cf. note 75 above), pp. 212 sqq., ślokas 29*; 32*; 36*; 41*; 47*. These stanzas are in the critical edition of Baroda Rām. II, 1, 35; 29*; 2, 32*; 13* 40*.

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the tragic period of Rāma's life in the forest. This poet, who liked to look back on old times, treated all the Kṣatriyas of the kingdom of Ayodhyā as small kings. This terminology would be more appropriate to *saṃghas* like that of the Licchavis, as will be shown in the following section.

4. Property in the soil

The Licchavis and others are called in Kauṭalya's *Arthaśāstra* "living on the title *rājā*"[84]. He does not explain this term. Once he uses the shorter form: "having the title *rājā*"[85]. Kauṭalya did not like the *saṃghas* and intended this term ironically: the Licchavi Kṣatriyas usurped the title King and behaved like kings but, in his opinion, were wrong in doing so.

A later Mahāyāna Buddhist text, *Lalitavistara*, has preserved for us a similar criticism of the Licchavi Kṣatriyas of the town of Vaiśālī. The future Buddha is sitting in heaven and thinking of his impending birth. In which family is he to be born? Certainly in one of Kṣatriyas, but it must be a proper one. The Bodhisattva is surrounded by Bodhisattvas and Devaputras who discuss the matter. Among the Kṣatriya families of the sixteen peoples of India that of the town of Vaiśālī is also discussed, some speaking in favour of it because the town is great and prosperous. But their opponents reject the idea because the Kṣatriyas of Vaiśālī (i. e. the Licchavis) do not speak to each other in the proper way, do not follow the *dharma*, do not preserve (the ranks of) the high and middle, of the old and the oldest; each of them thinks 'I am king! I am king!', and they do not become the disciples of anybody nor do they become righteous.[86] In the *saṃghas* there was no king, except sometimes a 'primus inter pares'; all Kṣatriyas were of equal birth and rank (see above). Kṛṣṇa complained about his relatives who were proud of this and that and made him, the leader of the *saṃgha*, helpless; Buddha prophesied that the Vṛjjis, who were confederates of the Licchavis, could not be defeated by the king of Magadha so long as (among other points) they were unanimous, followed their old, accepted *dharma* and honoured the elders[87]. The Licchavis in *Lalitavistara*, too, were blamed for claiming the position of king for every Kṣatriya of their *gaṇa*; nobody was willing to accept anybody as his teacher or spiritual guide.

There is a third document, presumably of a similar date (about 5th century A. D.), the introduction (*paccuppannavatthu*) to *Jātaka* 149, which tells us that

[84] *Arthaśāstra* (cf. note 58) pra. 160, 61, 5: rājaśabdopajīvin; Jayaswal, loc. cit., p 31 (cf. 49) translates: they observed (upajīv) the practice of assuming the title rājan.

[85] *rājaśabdin*, *Arthaśāstra*, loc. cit., 20.

[86] *Lalitavistara* (ed. P. L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, 1958) 15, 14–16. Jayaswal, loc. cit., p. 46 translates: "every one wanted to be the next president".

[87] *elders* = *mahallakās*: *Mahaparinirvāṇasūtra* (ed. E. Waldschmidt, Berlin, 1951), pp. 108 sqq.; Jayaswal, loc. cit., pp. 40 sq.

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Buddha once spoke about a certain bad Licchavi prince. In his time there lived in Vaiśālī 7707 kings permanently governing as kings, as many under-kings *(uparājānas*, heirs apparent), as many generals (*senāpatis)* and as many administrators of storehouses (*bhaṇḍāgārikas)*. Among these, one prince (*kumāra)* was bad and was reformed by Buddha himself through moral preaching[88]. This story does not criticise the system of government of the Licchavis but relates the facts soberly, although the figure 7707 looks exaggerated. If there were four times 7707 Kṣatriyas, these 30828 men must have been heads of families with a few hundred thousand members, the whole population of the town amounting in this way to a million.

This document proves that the *Arthaśāstra* and *Lalitavistara* are basically right, but it adds an important point: every one of these thousands of kings had his own *bhandāgārika* and his own storehouse, and must have had his own landed property to fill the storehouse. These smaller or bigger estates certainly consisted of a number of villages each. Moreover each of these small *rājas* had his own troops, all of them together presumably forming the army of the *gaṇa*.

Jayaswal, looking for some similar type of *gaṇa*, hinted at the aristocracy which the Greeks at the time of Alexander observed east of the Beas without preserving its name. There the governing body consisted of 5000 men (Kṣatriyas) who furnished the state with an elephant each[89]. Whether they claimed the title *rājan* or not, they must have had their own estates, storehouses and men in order to keep an elephant and a company which may have belonged to the elephant. According to the *Mahābhārata*, one elephant together with a chariot, 3 horses and three foot soldiers formed the smallest military unit called a *patti*, three of which formed a *senāmukha*, nine a *gulma* etc[90]. These 5000 well-to-do men were certainly Kṣatriyas who ruled the masses of the people as *saṃgha*.

Kauṭalya in his chapter on the Licchavis and other *saṃghas* who call themselves kings, advises his kingly reader to change the hostile *saṃgha* into a kingdom by intrigues[91]. He should find some prince among them who is held back for some reason or other (perhaps because he is too ambitious) and should claim the heir-apparentship for him. Astrologers etc. should be won over to spread this claim among the *saṃgha*, and the king should win over some *saṃghamukhyas* by stressing the point that this son or brother of a king will plead their cause. When they agree, he should send money and troops in order to help this group, and when he

[88] *The Jātaka* ed. V. Fausboll, London, 1877, vol. I, pp. 504 sq. — Jayaswal pp. 45 sq. 7707 of the inhabitants, i. e. of the foundation families, became the four executive office-holders of the *saṃgha*: presidents, vice-presidents, commanders-in-chief and chancellors of the exchequer.

[89] Jayaswal, loc. cit., p. 72 and Nilokanta Sastri, p. 124 quote Strabo. Altekar, loc. cit., p. 102 identifies this *saṃgha* with that of the Yaudheyas, quoting wrongly McCrindle, loc. cit., p. 121.

[90] B. K. Majumdar, *The Military System in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1960, p. 40, quoting allegedly Mbh.

[91] *Arthaśāstra* (cf. note 84) 160, 61, 20 sqq.

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has won, he should arrange a big festival. In the kingdoms also princes were sometimes held back; there must have been terrible intrigues among the members of dynasties, in kingdoms as well as in *saṃghas*, and the king should, according to the *Arthaśāstra*, make use of these intrigues for his own purposes. Kauṭalya then describes some other intrigues by which one should try to disrupt such *saṃghas*, by using women and so on in order to seduce the leaders of the *saṃghas*, so as to attain victory and become the only king over *saṃghas* governed by single kings[92].

The position of the Kṣatriyas in *saṃghas* thus being relatively clear, one has to answer the question as to what we know about them in kingdoms. Manu and other law books prescribe for Kṣatriyas the duty of protecting the people, which means holding military and government offices. In times of distress they were allowed to engage in the occupations of Vaiśyas also, but no document has been found to illustrate such customary prescriptions, How did they earn their livelihood? There is as yet no proof that they were big landowners although historians in general accept such a view. Of Brahmins we know a few of this kind; in the *Jātakas* at least there are some cases of Brahmin landlords[93] and the custom of *brahmadeyas*, (i. e. lands (fields or villages) "given" to Brahmins) is very old in India (see above). But the position of Kṣatriyas must have been different.

If we consider what the *Arthaśāstra* teaches as regards this question its tendency is altogether similar to what Megasthenes reported to his Greek countrymen about Indian soldiers. Megasthenes wrote that they pass the time of peace in idleness and sport, so well are they paid by the king; all their equipment comes from the royal arsenal, the elephants and horses from the king's stables, the care of these in war or peace being the task of others[94]. They were paid in cash, from which observation one scholar has concluded that this eliminated the necessity of granting them land revenue[95].

This record of Megasthenes is in full accord with that of Kauṭalya who included in his *Arthaśāstra* the list of salaries of the servants of the government[96], including the leaders of the army, of the elephants, of war chariots and cavalry, of the foot soldiers etc. This salary they received from the king's treasury; and from the king's storehouse the soldiers and the leaders got their daily rations[97]. The *Arthaśāstra* describes in full detail the duties of the overseer of the arsenal who is responsible for the production of all kinds of weapons[98]. One gets the impression

[92] Ibid. 70–72.

[93] W. Ruben, *Die Lage der Sklaven in der altindischen Gesellschaft*, Berlin, 1957, pp. 49 sq.; Suttanipāta I, 4 p. 12; R. S. Sharma, *Śūdras in Ancient India*, Delhi-Varanasi-Patna, 1958, p. 93.

[94] D. D. Kosambi, *Ancient Kosala and Magadha*, J. Bombay Branch RAS XXVII, 1951, p. 198.

[95] Thapar (cf. note 49) p. 67.

[96] *Arthaśāstra* pra. 91.

[97] Ibid. 91, 33; 57 sq.; B. Breloer, *Staatsverwaltung im alten Indien*, Leipzig, 1934, p. 313.

[98] *Arthaśāstra* 36, 1 sqq.; Breloer, loc. cit., pp. 351 sqq.

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that this branch of production was a monopoly of the state[99]. This overseer of the arsenal had further to store and preserve the weapons. He got the raw materials which he needed from the overseer of the jungle products, who got them from the administrators of the various jungles[100]. The king's overseer of elephants had to protect the forests of wild elephants and was responsible for the capture, taming and care of elephants. This also seems to have been the privilege of the king[101]. There was a special overseer of horses for the king's stables[102]. Another supervised the chariots, looked after their production[103] and was responsible for the training of the soldiers who had to fight from the chariots in their various capacities. Thus there was a standing army[104] equipped, fed and paid for by the king. It was dependent on him; it could exist only as long as he did[105]. Kauṭalya preferred an army of Kṣatriyas, who were well-trained, to one of Brāhmaṇas, and even Vaiśyas and Śūdras, according to him, were better soldiers than Brahmins because the Śūdras were so numerous[106].

This picture of the standing army of the kingdom given by Kauṭalya and Megasthenes has to be contrasted with that of the *saṃghas*. In the *saṃghas* of the Licchavis and beyond the Beas, the thousands of Kṣatriyas had their own small troops making part of the common army of the *saṃgha* which was not a standing one. They themselves fed them from their storehouses and equipped them, being the owners of the elephants etc. The Licchavis therefore claimed the title of *rājā* for 7707 Kṣatriyas who were well-to-do landlords.

Kauṭalya is silent about any big farms of the Kṣatriyas. As regards *brahmadeyas*, he advises the king to give fields to four types of Brahmins – to *ṛtvijs*, *ācāryas*, *purohitas* and *śrotriyas*[107]. Of these four he includes three in his list of salaries, according to which the *ṛtvij*, the *ācārya* and the *purohita* of the king get the highest salary, equal to that of the leader of the army, the heir-apparent etc. i. e. 48000 *paṇas*[108]. Their lesser colleagues living in villages, and Brahmin scholars in general (who perhaps got no salary at all from the king) should, according to Kauṭalya, be provided with rent-free fields. To these priests he added, as worthy of *brahmadeyas*, "overseers, accountants etc.", of whom accountants are also mentioned in the list of salaries; they got as much as the average soldier (i. e. 500 *paṇas*)[109]. The overseers mentioned in this phrase may be those who did not be-

[99] Breloer, loc. cit., p. 354.
[100] *Arthaśāstra* 35, 1; Breloer, loc. cit., pp. 296 sq.
[101] *Arthaśāstra* 35, 43 sq. Whoever killed an elephant, was killed by the overseer of elephants: ibid. 20, 8; *Raghuvaṃśa* V, 50.
[102] *Arthaśāstra*, 35, 47.
[103] Ibid. 49/51, 2.
[104] Kosambi, loc. cit.
[105] *tadbhāvabhāvi*: *Arthaśāstra* 137/139, 36.
[106] Ibid. 46 sq.
[107] Ibid. 19, 8.
[108] Ibid. 91, 4.
[109] Ibid. 91, 15.

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long to the group of the highest overseers nor to that of the military overseers, but were mentioned in the list of salaries as receivers of a middle salary rate of 1000 *paṇas*, twice as much as that of soldiers and accountants[110].

Overseers living in villages are mentioned together with ploughmen, herdsmen etc, to be watched by secret agents of the collector-general of the king's rents[111]. What these overseers had to do in the villages we are not told. Nor is it clear what is meant by "etc." after "overseers" and "accountants" quoted above as receivers of *brahmadeyas*. Then Kauṭalya adds another group, the *gopa*, *sthānika*, *anīkastha*, *cikitsaka*, *aśvadamaka* and *janghākārika*, who should also get *brahmadeyas*. This *gopa* must have been the administrator of five or ten villages[112], and the *sthānika* must have been his superior, the administrator of one quarter of the kingdom[113]. They are not included in the list of salaries. But the following three officials, the *anīkastha*, *cikitsaka* and *aśvadamaka* (veterinary sourgeons, physicians and horse-trainers), were given twice the salary of the overseers in the villages i. e. 2000 *paṇas*[114].

Whether these officials, either the lower or the superior ones, were all of them Brahmins, is not made clear in the *Arthaśāstra*, but it may be supposed that they were, since Kauṭalya recommended that they be given *brahmadeyas*, and since there is no reason to think that they were military officers who should be regarded as Kṣatriyas in the first place. We also do not understand whether these priests and officials received money and (or) rations in addition to their *brahmadeyas*.

Further we must bear in mind that this passage occurs in the chapter about the foundation of new villages. In the chapter giving instruction as to the administration of old villages, this topic is not dealt with. There it is only mentioned that the *gopa* should register the houses of taxpayers and non-taxpayers[115]. Among the non-taxpayers there may have been some holders of *brahmadeyas*.

Kauṭalya turns once more to our topic in the above-quoted chapter on salaries, and advises the king, in case he lacks money but has to give occasional gifts, to give forest produce, cattle or fields and only very little money. But he adds that if he wants to colonise waste land he should give only money, not a village (which would be a new one), so that he may administer all his villages in the same manner[116]. Kauṭalya's conception is certainly the following: in accordance with the main line of his whole book, he wants the king to be supreme master of his kingdom and its revenues, and in the first place of the rent from the soil – the part of the harvest belonging to the king. He wants that the nobility, the Brahmins as well as the Kṣatriyas, instead of being well-to-do and more or less independent

[110] Ibid. 91, 14.
[111] Ibid. 54/55, 15.
[112] Ibid. 54/55, 2; Breloer, loc. cit., p. 123.
[113] *Arthaśāstra* 54/55, 7; Breloer, pp. 121 sq.; one quarter consisted of 800 villages: *Arthaśāstra* 19, 4.
[114] Ibid. 91, 13.
[115] Ibid. 54/55, 4.
[116] Ibid. 91, 32–35.

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large landowners, should be servants of the state, i. e. of the king, maintained only by him. Fields might be given to Brahmins for priestly and administrative services but not to Kṣatriyas for military services, and certainly not whole villages or big estates.

But whether Kauṭalya succeeded in carrying this out in practice is doubtful. Only when he deals with colonizing waste land and founding new villages he refers twice to the subject of *brahmadeya*. It seems that in old villages also *brahmadeyas* did exist and could not be taken from the Brahmins. But whether all the Kṣatriyas in the kingdom of Magadha (not to speak of other kingdoms) were only servants of the king, is not certain. Similarly we may observe the opposite tendency in the claim of the Kṣatriyas of all or some of the *saṃghas* to be *rājas* and proprietors of their landed estates. How far these two opposite tendencies became realities in this or that state, in this or that *saṃgha* or kingdom, or in this or that period of the history of ancient India, we do not yet know. With regard to the struggle between Brahmins and Kṣatriyas for seniority in rank, we can again only note the two opposing tendencies in kingdoms and *saṃghas*, while still ignorant of the details of the story of this struggle for power and landed property. There was no ancient Indian historian who could have told us about the real development of society in the period between Buddha and the Guptas.

5. Kingless states

Before this type of *saṃgha* the *Arthaśāstra* deals with another type which it characterises as Kṣatriya organisations among (or in addition to) Kambojas and Surāṣṭras etc. living by *vārtā* and *śastra*[117], i. e. by agriculture, cattle-breeding, trade[118] and arms. To live by weapons, according to the *Arthaśāstra*, was the speciality of the Kṣatriya[119]; to live by agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade was the *dharma* of the Vaiśya[120], while the Śūdra also should live by *vārtā* and handicrafts. Thus Kauṭalya observed some *saṃghas* in which the Kṣatriyas lived by *vārtā* like Vaiśyas and at the same time by arms, like Kṣatriyas, without pretending to be kings. To subsist on *vārtā* was, according to Brahmanical *dharma*, the life of Kṣatriyas in times of distress[121]. These *saṃghas* therefore presumably lived in countries with barren soil, under poor conditions such as existed in the desert of Surāṣṭra and in the steppes of the North-West. Here property in the soil was certainly vested in the *saṃgha*, the whole group of Kṣatriyas or their village communities.

The *Arthaśāstra* says nothing about Brahmins in *saṃghas*, and nothing about Śūdras or slaves. It mentions only that there were teachers and disciples, lower and

[117] Ibid. 160/61, 4.
[118] Ibid. 1 c, 1.
[119] Ibid. 17, 6.
[120] Ibid. 7.
[121] Manu X, 95; but according to X, 83 such a Kṣatriya should avoid ploughing.

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higher ranks which did not ordinarily intermarry, and *saṃghamukhyas*. All of these may have been Kṣatriyas. Not even the above-mentioned teachers of knowledge need have been Brahmins, because Kṣatriyas also taught the knowledge of arms and perhaps that of polity, economics and philosophy. On the other hand, we cannot easily imagine *saṃghas* of this period without Brahmins, nor could they live without handicrafts which imply Śūdras. But we might think of the archaic type of Ṛgvedic society with only two *varṇas*, Ārya and Dāsa, the Āryas ploughing their fields, breeding cattle and at the same time defending their country with weapons, while some families of priests, also Āryas, had their special occupation, and at the same time there was a depressed group which also lived by agriculture, cattle-breeding and handicrafts. In the north-west and the west of Northern India, in some barren regions, such people might have continued Ṛgvedic life with only unimportant social developments such as are suggested by the use of the term Kṣatriya instead of Ārya. All the freemen of such a *saṃgha* were trained soldiers, all of them together formed the army. There were social differences which may have resulted in some of these Kṣatriyas riding elephants or horses while others fought on foot. All of them however were Kṣatriyas with *saṃghamukhyas* but no kings.

Kauṭalya first recommends to his reader that a king should try to disrupt all hostile *saṃghas* without differentiating between the above-mentioned two types[122]. But later on he deals especially with *saṃghas* of his second type in which everybody claims to be a king[123]. Before this paragraph he advises the royal reader to help the weaker section of the *saṃgha* in all disagreements with the more powerful section, spending money and sending soldiers, so that his party may kill the other[124]. This phrase occurring at the end of a paragraph is very similar to that used by Kauṭalya at the end of the whole chapter where he recommends that similar help should be given to the king's own candidate for the throne in a *saṃgha* in which every Kṣatriya wants to be king[125]. In the first place, it may mean that the king should strive to weaken the hostile *saṃgha* by internal strife. Then he should split it into small groups and carry off its members to be settled in new villages in his own kingdom. Or he might settle them all together on arable land which he is colonizing in such a way that four or five families of the *saṃgha* form single villages. When they live together they are ready to arm if necessity arises, but the king should hinder them from uniting against his own interest[126].

This treatment is quite suitable for Kauṭalya's first type of *saṃgha*, for poor peasants bearing arms. At the end of this chapter Kauṭalya once more mentions this method of settling the vanquished *saṃgha* in his own kingdom in order to become the sole king[127]. But whether the victorious king could deal with the well-

[122] *Arthaśāstra* 160/61, 6 sqq.
[123] Ibid. 20.
[124] Ibid. 15.
[125] Ibid. 70.
[126] Ibid. 16–19.
[127] Ibid. 70 sq.

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to-do Kṣatriyas of the second type of *saṃgha* in this way seems doubtful. One rather gets the impression that the *Arthaśāstra* recommended two ways of treatment for the two types of *saṃghas* although the point is not altogether clear.

According to *Kauṭalya* it seems that not only in the second type of *saṃgha*, where every Kṣatriya strove for the title of *rājā*, but also in the first, more archaic type, internal struggle went on continually. This first type of *saṃgha* also was no longer a tribe in the sense of gentile society, but was already a complex population in which class differentiation had begun. Such a society, midway between tribe and state and in transition from tribe to state, is indicated in some passages of the epic which describe *arājaka* peoples. These originally had no kings nor *daṇḍa* (army and police), but *dharma* was used by the people themselves for mutual protection. Then they started fighting among themselves and finally made kings to preserve peace and order[128]. Reading such chapters one gets the impression that their authors had observed such social developments with their own eyes, just as Kauṭalya had done, who not only studied such happenings but made use of them in order to destroy hostile *saṃghas*, whose main defect, according to all ancient Indian writers, was their lack of unity.

6. Development of the *saṃghas*

Both these types of *saṃghas* were organisations of Kṣatriyas and may therefore be called aristocracies. When and how they began is a matter of speculation. They certainly existed in the time of Buddha. Before that there were organisations, described in the Brāhmaṇas, with forms of government which were typical for the period of transition from gentile tribes to states. Hereditary kingdoms were the rule, but the kings were not yet fully developed despots, they were kings of what historical materialists call a military democracy. Whether at that time *saṃghas* already existed or not, has not yet been decided.

However, Megasthenes claimed that *saṃghas* developed from kingdoms, and we know that the Videhas had kings up to the time of Buddha, when their last king died and they became a *saṃgha*, part of the Vṛjji-Licchavi confederation[129]. Thus the archaic kingdoms of military democracy developed into kingdoms of a despotic character on the one hand (like Magadha, Kosala etc.), and *saṃghas* on the other (like the Licchavis). This may have happened some time before Buddha, about 600 B. C. But we must bear in mind that there was no clear-cut demarcation between military democracy, monarchy and aristocracy.

The main produce was then agricultural, and the exploiters struggled among themselves in order to get the biggest share of the common produce, of the harvest and of the cattle of the village communities. This led, on the one hand, to the claim of the king to be the only recipient of rent from the soil, to the privilege of

[128] Jayaswal, loc. cit., pp. 82 sq.
[129] Ibid. pp. 109 sqq.

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the Brahmins to receive *brahmadeyas* from the king, and to the organisation of the Kṣatriyas as military and administrative servants of the king, with noble rank in return for service to the king in kingdoms; while on the other hand it resulted in the organisation of *saṃghas*, where Kṣatriyas, as the ancient gentile aristocracy, were big landowners. The details of this struggle for the soil and its produce we do not know. We can only observe these three parties – the king, the Kṣatriyas and the Brahmins. But what the producers thought or did is still an unsolved problem. We can only guess that in kingdoms the kings succeeded in holding their position by balancing the contending forces of the people, the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas. The interest of the masses was of course to keep as much of their agricultural produce for themselves as possible as against the other three parties, each of which claimed as much of the produce as they could.

This struggle continued from the period of the beginning of the ancient Indian states till to-day, but the forms of struggle changed. The fight between the ancient kingdoms and *saṃghas* as one phase of this struggle went on for approximately one thousand years and ended with the disappearance of the aristocracies at the end of the Gupta period. How the *saṃghas* were in various places defeated and conquered but came to life again, is a complex problem of ancient Indian history. Some of the last *saṃghas* are supposed to have been destroyed by the Huns, or a little earlier by the conquests of Samudragupta[130]. But the main reason for their extinction was, I think, an internal one. Not that monarchy was in itself better and therefore more successful than aristocracy, which preserved some elements of gentile democracy. But to organise strongly-governed kingdoms was certainly progressive in the time of Buddha. Up to Kauṭalya we can study the tendency to centralize the administration of the soil and water in big estates, thereby improving agriculture. But to preserve some elements of original gentile democracy where there was the menace of growing despotism, was also something valuable and humanistic, and it was not by chance that Buddha, Mahāvīra and Kṛṣṇa were anti-brahmanic and anti-despotic Kṣatriyas, the philosophers and religious reformers that appeared in such aristocracies.

If it is true that the difference between kingdoms and aristocracies was essentially conditioned by the difference of property in the soil, this property must be held responsible for the growth, the long duration and the extinction of the aristocracies. In the long run, it was presumably neither possible to put the king's claim to his privileged ownership of all the rent from the soil completely into practice, nor to keep the aristocracies going. The contradiction between the king's and the Kṣatriya's interest in the soil resulted ultimately in a compromise. The king was acknowledged by the Kṣatriyas (and Brahmins, of course) as the only receiver of rent from the soil on condition that he not only gave *brahmadeyas* to Brahmins, but feudal estates to Kṣatriyas also. Thus these became practically masters of large parcels of land, being in law merely feudal landlords invested with their fiefs by the king. What the rôle of the masses of peasants and herdsmen,

[130] Basham, loc. cit., p. 98.

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artisans and traders may have been in this connection, we do not yet know. But the problem of how best to exploit the steadily growing agriculture etc. was certainly important for this social development. Nor do we yet know in detail what happened in the different kingdoms and aristocracies during the decisive period of the decay of the aristocracies. But at all events this social development was basic for the transition of ancient Indian slaveholding society to feudalism, a process which went on for centuries beginning long before the Gupta empire.

7. Ancient republics, Indian and non-Indian

Some historians have already hinted at a measure of parallelism in the ancient social development of India and Greece. R. C. Majumdar especially has maintained that the Indian republics after Buddha's time were similar to that of Athens under Cleisthenes (see above). I do not see that the *saṃghas* were essentially a local rather than a gentile organisation, as Majumdar does; on the contrary, a great number of historians stress their gentile character by calling them tribes or clans, and indeed the Kṣatriyas of a *saṃgha* seem to have claimed to be related to each other. I would rather suggest a comparison with Solon, who organised the Athenian army in such a way that the richest members of the Athenian state were obliged to spend their money on "*lithurgiai*", especially to provide ships for the fleet, while the members of the second richest class had to equip themselves as cavalrymen.[131] According to tradition, Servius Tullius in Rome organised the army in a similar way: some of the richest Romans also had to serve as cavalry.[132] Keeping these European developments in mind, one might imagine that the *saṃgha* beyond the Beas in Alexander's time obliged the 5000 well-to-do Kṣatriyas to equip an elephant for the army, because such young aristocratic states which had recently dethroned their kings had no better means to organise their army. The Licchavis with their 7707 kings seem to have taken a similar step already, some time before Buddha, i. e. aproximately at the same time that the Athenians had their revolution under Solon (594 B. C.) and the Romans under Servius Tullius (6th century B. C.). This happened some time after the beginning of the iron-age, when the Indians, Greeks and Romans already lived partly in towns, changed from tribes to states, and dethroned their kings who had been characteristic for the period of military democracy. The richest Athenians were those who earned 500 *medimnoi* (bushels); they were big landowners like the Kṣatriyas in the Indian *saṃghas*, but were not all born in this class. They could originate from the nobility, the "well born" *(eupatrides)* as well as from commoners *(demos)*. In the "*timocraty*" of Solon only money counted, in contrast, it would seem, to the Indian *saṃghas*. Later in Athens the archaic popular assembly

[131] *Weltgeschichte in zehn Bänden*, ed. J. M. Shukow; vol. I, Berlin, 1961 (translated from Russian), pp. 766 sq.

[132] Ibid. II, 1962, p. 115.

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was revived, in contrast to India, but the poor could only elect the state officials in the assembly and could not themselves be elected. Thus the Athenian state was an aristocracy like the Indian *saṃgha*, but with important peculiarities. We have no document to prove that any Indian *saṃgha* liberated the peasants from their debts, as Solon did. The Kṣatriyas among the Licchavis were essentially different from the "well born" (*eupatrides*) of Athens, a section of whom had become rich proprietors of seagoing vessels exporting wine, oil and the produce of Athenian handicrafts, and importing wheat. In India towns were residences of the kings or centres of administration, with some development of handicrafts, although not very much, for the requirements of the kings (or the Kṣatriyas) and their official apparatus. The rôle of money in India was not the same as in Greece. Indian and Greek society and towns were very different and so were the two types of aristocracies.

The ancient Greek town derived from the still older Phoenician town, and older still were certain Assyrian towns with some kind of aristocratic government. Similar again were some Lydian towns and Carthago. This oriental type of commercial town was, therefore, characteristic of several periods and regions of ancient oriental society. Although its importance should not be overestimated, it was important enough as a rival to oriental despotism. Whether it existed in India is not yet certain. It is possible that some towns in the Panjab which the Greeks called "independent towns", were similar commercial towns along the roads leading from India through the Panjab to Iran. This, then, would be a third type of *saṃgha* in addition to the two types which were distinguished by Kauṭalya.

But let us rather look once more at Rome. This city was not such a highly developed commercial town as Athens when the citizens of both drove out their kings who had held office during the period of military democracy. We do not know much about ancient Rome or the events during this evolution. Nationalism was indeed a factor that entered into the struggle of the Roman people against their last kings who were Etruscans, but there were certainly social causes as well. During the following centuries one of the basic struggles in Rome was for the ownership of the soil, fought out between the patricians and plebeians. Both classes wanted the *ager publicus*, the land which the Romans conquered and used to parcel out. One might imagine that one of the reasons why the patricians were interested in driving out the kings and assuming power themselves was their desire for land. This, then, would be somewhat similar to the struggle of the Kṣatriyas in *saṃghas* against their kings whom they dethroned. The aristocratic owners of big estates in Italy later on became feudal lords and their peasants (*coloni*) became feudal tenants nearly in the same centuries when India also showed similar developments and changed from slavery to feudalism.

In India the competition between the king, the gentile aristocracy (Kṣatriyas) and the priestly aristocracy (Brahmins) was similar to that in other ancient oriental societies, in which all three strove to acquire property in the soil and to exploit the peasants who lived in their village communities. Whether there existed aristocracies of the two main Indian types in other oriental countries, I do not

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yet know. In general it seems that India had some pecularities such as the system of the four *varṇas*, as well as many social features common to other oriental countries.

World history being still full of riddles, one thing is certain. India has had her democratic tradition. The ancient Indian republics were similar to the Greek and Roman republics, but were at the same time aristocracies and as such different from the Athenian democracy. The assembly of the Kṣatriyas in an ancient Indian *saṃgha* has to be derived from still older gentile popular assemblies just as the different assemblies in the Greek or Roman republics, and they preserved some element of gentile democracy. From this source sprang the democracy in the Buddhist *saṃgha* as well as the anti-despotism of Kṛṣṇa, the killer of Kaṃsa; and the Kṛṣṇa, of the *Bhagavadgītā* became in our century the hero of terrorists who fought against the British colonial oppressors of India. Just as *ahimsā* came from Buddha and Mahāvīra to Mahātmā Gandhi, *karmayoga* (selfless activity) came down rom Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa to Swāmī Vivekananda and Lokamānya Tilak.

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The Impact of Trade c. 100 B.C. – 300 A.D. in India

Romila Thapar

The political history of India in the post-Mauryan period from the first century B. C. to the third century A. D. presents a confusing picture of a welter of states forming and reforming under a variety of dynastic monarchies. The Shungas succeeding the Mauryas had trouble with the Greeks in the north-west and with the Satavahanas in the western Deccan. The Bactrian Greeks owing to Parthian pressure were dislocated in Afghanistan and were forced into India. Punjab became the nucleus of Indo-Greek power in India. In the first century A. D. the Indo-Greek kingdoms gave way to Kushan power. In western India, the Parthians gave way to the Shakas (Scythians) who remained the dominant power until their final defeat by the Guptas in the fourth century. The Satavahanas moved with uncertain feeling along the Godavari valley until the first century A. D., when they established themselves in the western Deccan, the region of Nasik being their centre. Still further south on the west coast of Malabar the Cheras were fighting for supremacy, whilst on the east coast the Cholas and the Pandyas were at war, with constantly shifting boundaries – a situation which was to remain current until the establishment of Pallava power in the fourth century.

Politically, therefore, there was no constant factor on the sub-continent. Boundaries changed with frightening rapidity. Even political structures varied from region to region, the monarchic system of the Cheras being almost unrecognizable to the Kushans. Politics was a matter of local expediency. Cultural and linguistic variations were equally immense, from the Tamil speaking citizens of Kaveripattinam on the east coast of south India to the Greek speaking citizens of Taxila in the north west. The contrast was particularly striking as it followed on the Mauryan empire which politically at any rate had attempted to present a cohesive unity.

Nevertheless, despite the political instability, there was one factor which gave the sub-continent a sense of continuity and unity, and this was trade. The existence of the Mauryan empire had provided the initial basis for the growth of trade. Internally, the entire sub-continent, except for the extreme south, had been administered by a single administrative system which resulted in the opening up of various regions and in communications between various parts of the empire. In addition, extensive political contacts had been developed with the western world – in those days the Hellenic world of western Asia and the Mediterranean – through a frequent exchange of envoys. That these political contacts would lead to

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trading contacts was an almost inevitable result. The conquest of north-western India by the Indo-Greeks, Kushans and Shakas had the immense advantage of bringing these regions into still closer contact with western Asia, with all the attendant facilities for a vast increase in trade. Central Asia was also brought into the orbit of the Indian merchant and this in turn resulted in trade with China.

In the first century B. C. another European power emerged with money to spend on exotic luxuries. Rome became a valuable customer for Indian trade. The merchants of north-western India concentrated on central and west Asian trade. Those of western India and southern India turned their attention to the trading marts in southern Arabia, the Red Sea and Alexandria – the port which handled the Roman trade. The Roman need for spices took Indian traders to south-east Asia where they also discovered a large potential for Indian trade (which incidentally was fully exploited after the Roman trade died down in the second century A. D.). Roman interest in Indian merchandise did not confine itself to acquiring goods through Arab and other middle-men. The Romans indulged in the expensive venture of establishing their own trading-stations in South India. These were to become an extremely lucrative source of gold for Indian commerce.

Throughout the sub-continent, the merchant prospered as is obvious from the inscriptions and donatory records left by them. Prosperity also meant the possibility of indulging in patronage, especially of the arts. Trade provided the money for constructing the *stūpas* and shrines of Buddhism during this period. Both Buddhism and Jainism, deriving their financial support chiefly from the mercantile community, basked in the comfort of steady and dependable patronage.

An increase in trade demanded the efficient organisation of production and distribution of the commodities traded. The guild system became the general pattern of production. Distribution was the concern either of individual merchants or less commonly of merchant guilds. Guilds facilitated a high output and gradually individual artisans tended to congregate together and form guilds. The guild now became the nucleus of urban centres and incidentally an important factor in the making of public opinion. It provided both a social status and a fair degree of general security for the artisan. The possibilities of increasing output led the guilds to employ hired labour, in addition to the artisans, consisting both of free labour and slaves. Guild mobility was restricted since they had to register in a particular locality and could not move without official permission. Any trade or profession could form a guild, the more common artisan guilds being those of the potters, metal workers, carpenters, etc. The size of the guild varied considerably, some being extremely large. There is a reference to a wealthy potter, Saddalaputta, who owned five hundred potters' workshops and in addition organised the distribution of their product himself, owning a fleet of boats which carried the pottery to the various market towns on the Ganges[1]. But Saddalaputta must have been among the exceptions since the impression from the sources is not one of monopolistic concern.

[1] *Uvasaga Dasao* VI, pp. 163 sqq.

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Members of a guild were controlled by a guild court, which met from time to time in the guild-hall and which settled matters relating to hours of work, wages, which were fixed in accordance with the quality of the work, and any dispute arising between artisans or between artisans and customers. This court worked in consultation with a guild council which supervised the financial aspect of the guild's activities. *Shreni-dharma* or customary usage of the guild had the force of law. That the guild also interfered in the private life of its members is apparent from the fact that if a married woman wished to become a Buddhist nun she had not only to obtain permission from her husband but also from his guild.

The two institutions of guild and caste worked together in close association; caste providing the guild with a continual supply of artisans and labourers. The children of a particular sub-caste would tend to join their father's guild, since it was accepted that this profession was open to them and they were often trained for it in the guild school. Formal education as given by brahmans was generally not available to artisans or members of the *Vaishya* caste. Their education was confined mainly to professional training and a smattering of formal education which tended to limit the choice of profession. Thus the guild could always depend on a regular membership from one generation to the next. The threat to the guild came in periods of transition when the occupational nature of a sub-caste underwent a change.

Guilds had their own insignia, banners, seals and other marks of differentiation. Surviving descriptions of the banners and insignia suggest the close-knit character of guild members and the feeling of distinctiveness between guilds. These banners, etc. were displayed in processions on festive occasions. Insignia were also a means of advertising the guild, although admittedly a more effective method was that of giving generous donations to religious institutions. The ivory workers' guild at Vidisa carved the stone sculpture on the gateways and railings surrounding the *stūpa* at Sanchi; a guild of corn-dealers donated a magnificient cave-shrine to the Buddhists. One of the cave inscriptions at Nasik inscribed at the order of Ushavadatta, the Shaka ruler, records an endowment to a temple, which consisted of the interest on a large sum of money invested with a guild of weavers[2].

"In the year 42, in the month Vesakha, Ushavadatta, son of Dinika and son-in-law of Nahapana, the *Kshaharata Kshatrapa*, has bestowed this cave on the Sangha generally; he has also given a perpetual endowment, three thousand – 3000 – *Kahapanas* which for the members of the Sangha of any sect and any origin dwelling in this cave will serve as cloth money and money for outside life; and those *Kahapanas* have been invested in guilds, dwelling in Govardhana – 2000 in a weavers' guild interest one *pratika* (monthly) for the hundred and 1000 in another weavers' guild interest 3/4 of a *padika* (monthly) for the hundred, and those *Kahapanas* are not to be repaid, their interest only to be enjoyed. Out of them, the two thousand, 2000 – at one *pratika* per cent are the cloth money; out of them to every one of the twenty monks who keep the *vassa* (the rainy season when monks remained at the monastery) in my cave, a cloth money of twelve *Kahapanas*. As to the thou-

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, VIII, pp. 78 sqq.

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sand which has been invested at an interest of 3/4 of a *pratika* per cent, out of them the money for *kushana*. And at the village of Chikhalapadra in the Kapura district have been given eight thousand – 8000 – stems of cocoanut trees, and all this has been proclaimed and registered at the town's hall at the record office, according to custom . . ."

The inscription provides interesting evidence on two aspects of guild activities. On the political side, guilds were obviously a significant factor in urban life and guild leaders could be powerful figures in society. Yet there are no definite indications of guild leaders attempting to take over political control. Such control appears to have been clearly demarcated for royalty and left uninterfered with by the guild leaders; a situation which calls for some explanation. A possible reason for this is that the power of the guild was, in absolute terms, limited. The King remained the strongest single political factor. For a guild leader to seize political power would have meant initially the political fraternizing of a number of powerful guilds and a conscious plan to obtain political control. The fraternization of guilds was effectively prevented by caste rules e. g. the ban on eating together on an inter-caste basis. Thus, whereas the guilds were of a similar economic status and could communicate on that level, there may well have been bars on social inter-communications between the same guilds. Without social intercommunication, fraternization even with a political objective would have been impossible. Furthermore, royalty invested its money in guild activities and thereby had an interest in the wellbeing of the guild, which it could help to ensure. Royal support of a tangible kind, and lack of opposition from the king may well have dulled the edge of political ambition amongst the guild leaders.

The Nasik inscription further indicates that the guild could act as a banker, financier and trustee as well. Generally, however, these functions were carried out by a different category of merchants known as the *Sreshtins* (the ancestors of the modern *Sethi*, *Chetti* and *Chettivar*). Banking was not a full time occupation and the *Sreshtin* often had other interests as well. As a profession, banking became important only after the introduction of a money economy (cowrie shells or the barter system being hardly conducive to investment). Consequently bankers were not uniformly found in all parts of the country, their presence being more frequent in areas conducting a sizeable export trade, for which large-scale investments were necessary. The coins of this period bear the influence of foreign currencies, mainly Greek and Roman, and certain foreign coins such as the Roman *denarii* had a free circulation in South India. (In fact it has been suggested that Roman gold coins were used as bullion in South India, since many were defaced by a bar struck by Indian authorities.) The use of a money economy did not drive out the barter system, which continued to be current in the more remote areas less directly connected with long distance trade.

Usury was an accepted part of banking and the general rate of interest was 15% per annum[3]. Money lent for long distance trade by sea had no restrictions on

[3] *Arthashastra*, II, 8; III, 11.

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interest, which could rise to as high a figure as 240% per annum. A contemporary source has suggested that the rate of interest should vary according to the caste of the man to whom money is lent i. e. the upper castes paying a smaller rate than the lower castes. The obvious rationale behind this being that it was more difficult for the poorer class – the lower caste – to pay off debts. Indebtedness meant lack of mobility and an attitude of acceptance.

Industry was generally organised in areas where raw material was readily found, or else where a tradition of a particular craft existed. This was particularly the case with the spinning and weaving of cotton and silk. Women were frequently employed in the preparation of cotton textiles[4]. These were locally produced in almost every region and found markets throughout the country. Trade had brought about the exchange of a variety of articles. Magadha continued to supply iron, and copper came from the older sites in Rajasthan, the Deccan plateau and the foothills of the Himalayas. The latter also supplied the popular musk and saffron. The Punjab had its salt range with abundant supplies of salt. Southern India provided spices, precious stones, sandal-wood and gold (though not in a large quantity).

The Roman trade with South India was the most profitable overseas trade for Indian merchants. Roman trading stations were established both in the western Deccan and in South India[5]. Descriptions of the *Yavana* (as the Romans were called) ships arriving at Kaveripattinam are to be found in early Tamil literature. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (1st. Century A. D.) provides details of this trade and the various centres in western Asia and India which were connected with it. The hinterland of Ethiopea provided African ivory and gold and was an importer of Indian muslin. The coastal towns of Arabia linked the Red Sea with the west-Asian routes. Dioscoride was the island of Socotra, an important port of exchange where Indian ships brought rice, wheat, cloth and female slaves and took away tortoise shells. The southern shore of the Persian gulf was dotted with ports exchanging cargoes of copper, sandal-wood, teak and ebony coming from India and purple-dye, pearls, textiles, wine, dates, gold and slaves going to India. The port of Barbaricum is often referred to and was situated on the Indus delta. Linen, topaz, coral, storax, frankincense, glass, silver, gold plate and wine came from the west and in return spices, turquoise, lapis lazuli, muslin, silk yarn and indigo were sent westwards. By far the most important port on the west coast was Barygaza (modern Broach). It imported a vast assortment of cargo including Italian, Greek and Arab wines, copper, tin, lead, coral, topaz, gauze, storax, sweet clover, glass, realgar, antimony, gold and silver coin and various medicinal ointments. In addition there were special presents for the local kings – gold and silver jewellery, singing boys, maidens, and superior wines and textiles. Barygaza exported spices, spikenard, bdellium, ivory, agate, carnelian, lycium, muslin, silk, mallow cloth and pepper.

[4] *Arthashastra*, II. 23.

[5] Wheeler, *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers*.

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The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* continues with a list of the ports along the Malabar coast together with their items of export – pepper, pearls, ivory. silk, spikenard, malabathrum, diamonds, sapphires, precious stones and tortoise shell. Imports included coins, topaz, thin cloth, linens, antimony, coral, crude glass, copper, tin, lead, wine, realgar, orpiment and wheat. The items of export and import seem to have been confused at times, but these lists do at least indicate the articles which were traded. Calliena (Kalyana) and Muziris (Cranganore) are mentioned as important ports. The itinerary then follows round the tip of the peninsula and up the east coast mentioning Colchi, where criminals were employed to work the pearl fisheries; Camara, which may have been the same as Ptolemy's Khaberis on the mouth of the Kauveri; Padouke which has been identified as Arikamedu; Sopatma, which lay between Pondicherry and Madras; and Masalia, probably Masulipatam. The east coast ports were also linked with Malaya and China, for the itinerary continues with the mention of Chryse (literally 'Golden'). Ptolemy also refers to the Aurea Chersonesus which is assumed to be Malaya, the name probably being derived from the Sanskrit name *Suvarna bhumi* also meaning the 'Golden Land.' Northwards the itinerary lists this, which is interpreted as China. That the Roman ships did visit Chinese ports or ports in South-East Asia which traded with China, is evident from the discovery of celadon-ware sherds at Arikamedu. The reference to coins as an item of import is interesting and lends support to the theory that Roman coins were used as bullion. The frequency of Roman coin hoards found in the Peninsula is a further indication of this. Pliny complained of the drain on Roman gold through the Indian trade, since the Indian trade was paid for in currency rather than by a balance of exports to India.

The site of Arikamedu was located and excavated extensively over the last twenty years. It was more than a mere port of exchange since it was the site of a large Roman trading station. From the variety of Roman pottery, beads, glass and terracotta objects found at Arikamedu, it would seem that the Romans were there from the first century B. C. to the early second century A. D. Not only were Indian goods bought and shipped from here, but certain goods such as muslins were manufactured, presumably in accordance with Roman taste and requirements, and then sent to Rome.

The Roman demand for spices intensified Indian trade with South-East Asia. This incentive was soon forgotten in the discovery that Indian goods could find many markets in this part of Asia, mainly Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Cambodia and Borneo. Soon Indian trading stations were established. Since the Roman trade had been the original motivation, it was the traders of the Indian west coast and south India who took the initiative.

Trade routes followed the older ones in the main with little innovation. The Mauryan Royal Highway from Pataliputra to Taxila connected the north of India with the land routes to the west via Afghanistan and Persia. The use of the monsoon winds was the biggest innovation of the time in communications. It shortened the distance between the west coast of India and the Red Sea. Inevitably it also led to a decline in trade along the Persian Gulf and the Indus delta,

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the ports of which were now byepassed. The sea route to South-East Asia followed the coast of Burma, Malaya etc.

The opening up of Central Asia to Indian traders led to the establishing of trading stations in the oases and kingdoms scattered across the areas between Turkistan and China. Indian merchant colonies grew up in places such as Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, Miran, Kucha, Qara-Sahr and Turfan. Apart from the demand for Chinese silk in Indian markets, the Indian trader could again be a middle-man in the trade between China and Rome. Roman traders had ventured in small numbers as far as the Gobi Desert, but they were not enough to establish trading stations. It was within the sub-continent however that communications developed at an accelerated pace. Routes followed the coast and the river valleys. Ferries were common on rivers, bridges being rare. Most of the travelling was done in the dry summers and winters, the rainy season being difficult. Travellers banded together into caravans, there being more security in travelling as a group than in isolation.

The direct impact of trade naturally affected the economic development of India. But trade was also an indirect means of achieving various changes or modifications in the general pattern of Indian life and culture. Perhaps the biggest impact was on the evolution of Buddhism, both in the art forms which Buddhism inspired and in the religion itself. The mercantile community supported Buddhism to a large extent and many of the *stūpas* of this period as well as the Buddhist cave monasteries owed their existence to the generosity of wealthy merchants. Buddhism therefore travelled together with the trade to western Asia, to central Asia and to South-East Asia. This is not to suggest that it was exclusively Buddhism which the Indian traders took with them to other parts of the world. Brahmanism and Jainism also had their devotees, but Buddhism was more easily exportable and being more given to proselytizing than Brahmanism, Buddhist monks exploited trade communications.

Trade between the Hellenic world and north-western India brought Greco-Roman sculpture from Asia Minor and Alexandria to Taxila. The influence of this on local craftsmen brought about the hybrid school of art called Gandhara, after the area where it was commonly found, and it was used to give artistic expression to the Buddhist legend and the newly acquired complex of saints and heavens which Buddhism now boasted. These latter were largely, though not entirely, the result of Buddhism coming into contact with Manichaeans, Gnostics, Neo-Platonists, Christians and Zoroastrians. Similarities in the Christ legend and the Buddha legend are difficult to ignore, even if attempts are made to dismiss them as the collective sub-conscious of the Aryans. The observances of the sect of Essenes also point to a knowledge of Indian religious beliefs and practices in the Mediterranean world.

There was much argument at this time as to what constituted the original teaching of the Buddha. The support of the mercantile community necessitated the inclusion of certain ethics which would be amenable to and in conformity with the ethics of the class which provided the main basis of support to the Buddhist

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Order. Frugality became a virtue as did the investment of a sizeable portion of one's income[6]. The concept of the *bodhisattva* emerged, influenced by Chinese and central Asian ideas, but perhaps encouraged by other considerations. It was now said that merit could be accumulated through generations of births until one finally attained complete merit and become a *bodhisattva*. Furthermore, merit could also be transferred from one person to another by a pious act, e. g. donating a monastic cell to the Order – all of this being in accordance with the best of capitalist ethics, the accumulation and transference of capital.

Apart from their rôle in the economy of the time, the guilds were also important as centres of education. Formal education in the conventional sense remained in the hands of the brahmans. Guild schools became centres of technical education. Knowledge of mining, metallurgy, weaving, dying, carpentry, metal work etc., was maintained and developed by the relevant guild. The degree of technical advance can be gauged by the coins which have survived, the pillars of Mauryan and later times in which stone cutting and polishing reached a state of near perfection, or the northern black polished ware, a pottery with a lustre which defies reproduction.

Engineering skill particularly in the building of dams and irrigation tanks is evident from inscriptions relating to these. The true arch, although it was known, judging by a series discovered in the palace area of the Kaushambi excavations, does not seem to have been regularly used in buildings, most of them still following the engineering style of wooden construction. There was a tendency therefore for empirical knowledge to be concentrated in the guilds and their schools. A few centuries later this was to develop into a dichotomy between theoretical knowledge obtainable in brahmanical centres and empirical knowledge limited to the artisans. Technical and empirical education was therefore dependent on the economic prosperity of the guild. Two sciences which benefitted by the increase in communications with the west were medicine and astronomy. An exchange of the knowledge of herbs improved medical knowledge. Travel by mid-ocean routes necessitated a reliable knowledge of the stars and no doubt merchants were willing to provide the funds for this. Contact with western Asia resulted in an increase in the knowledge of astronomy.

As a result of trade with the west the image of India became more clearly defined in western sources. The Mediterranean world showed a substantial interest in the Indian sub-continent which was described in a number of major works of the time such as Strabo's *Geography*, Arrian's *Indika*, Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* and Ptolemy's *Guide to Geography*. India had come to occupy a significant position in the world as known to the Greco-Romans. It was this in part which led to the arrival of a new religion in India during the first century A. D. Christianity of the Nestorian variety travelled to India on the trading ships of the time. Unfortunately Indian curiosity about the places with which the traders conducted business does not seem to have inspired a

[6] *Dīgha Nikāya*, III, p. 188.

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wish to probe into the living pattern of these areas and peoples. Economic relationships appear to have sufficed. It is possible that such literature did exist but has not survived. All that remains are fanciful versions of foreign lands woven into myths and fables. It is hard to believe that there was no curiosity about the Romans for instance, who were actually living at Arikamedu. The survival of what Indians thought of the peoples and countries with whom they traded would have provided a fascinating perspective in the study of trading activities during this period.

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Early Indian Feudalism (c. 400—1200 A.D.)

R. S. Sharma

There are as many definitions of socialism as there are socialists. Similarly there are as many definitions of feudalism as there are scholars working on the subject. But viewed in the light of European experience its political essence lay in the organization of the whole administrative structure on the basis of land; its economic essence was the institution of serfdom according to which peasants were attached to the soil owned by the landed intermediaries between the king and the actual tillers who had to pay rent in kind and labour to them. The system was based on a self-sufficient economy in which things were mainly produced for local use by the peasants and their lords and not for a market. A study of Indian feudalism will have to take account of these elements.

In India the origin and development of political feudalism is to be sought in the land grants made to *brāhmaṇas* from the first century A. D. onwards. Their number becomes considerable in Northern India in the Gupta period and goes on increasing ever afterwards. The monastery of Nālandā owned 200 villages in the reign of Harṣa. Villages granted to religious donees by the Pālas and Pratīhāras were considerable in number, but those allotted by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas were far more numerous. One grant mentions 1400 and another 400 villages given in this manner. *Brāhmaṇas* and temples were apparently granted land revenues not for rendering civil and military services to their patrons but for spiritual service. In the benefices granted to them they were allowed fiscal and administrative rights such as the maintenance of law and order and the realization of fines from criminals. Hsüan Tsang states that high officers of the state were paid by land grants, but we have no other indication of this practice in his times. However, if *brāhmaṇas* were paid by grants of revenues, how could the others be paid differently? Inscriptions support the practice mainly from 1000 A. D.[1]. It appears that land was granted by the ruling chiefs to their kinsmen as well as to others who served as vassals and officials. In the period before 1000 A. D. we have more of such grants in Orissa and the Deccan than in Bengal, Bihar and U. P. But in the 11th and 12th centuries we find a sizable number of secular assignees in Northern India, particularly in the dominions of the Gāhaḍavālas, Caudellas, Kalacuris, Caulukyas, and Paramāras.

[1] R. S. Sharma, *Land Grants to Vassals and Officials etc.*, Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, IV, Leiden, 1961, pp. 70–105.

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Vassals were known as *bhūpāla, bhoktā, bhogī, bhogika, bhogijana, bhogapatika, bhogirūpa, mahābhogī, bṛhadbhogī, bṛhadbhogika, rājā, ṛājñī, rājarājanaka, rājyanaka, rānaka, rājaputra, rājavallabha, ṭhakkura, sāmanta, mahāsāmanta, mahāsāmantādhipati, mahāsāmanta-rāṇaka, sāmantaka rājā, māṇḍalika* and probably *mahāmaṇḍaleśvara*. Epigraphic records refer to grants made to *mahāsāmantas, rāṇakas, rājaputras* and *māṇḍalikas* and some others, but others also seem to have been endowed with land. Of these, big vassals enjoyed the right to use the five great musical instruments. The chief obligation of the vassals was to render military aid to their lords. Whether a similar obligation devolved on the officials who were given feudal titles and paraphernalia is not definitely known, but there is little doubt about their gradual feudalisation, especially in Mahārāṣṭra and Northern India.

What distinguished early Indian feudalism is the provision for fiscal units of 10 or 12 villages. The law-book of Manu, a work of the first to second century A. D., lays down that collectors in charge of 10 villages or their multiples should be paid by land grants. These units persisted in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa and to some extent in the Pāla dominions. But in the kingdoms of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras and their vassals and successors, the Cāhamānas, Paramāras and Caulukyas, there prevailed units of 12 or 16 villages or their multiples. Some were handed over to the members of the ruling family as personal estates, but others were possibly fiscal units placed under officers paid by land grants. Apparently these new units were imposed by the Rajputs on the subjugated population. It is hypothetical whether they had any Central Asian parallels and whether, like the German invasion in Europe, the penetration of the Hūṇas and Gurjaras provided any external stimulus to the growth of feudalism. Place names in North-Western and Central India can throw some light on the nature and extent of the Gurjara expansion, and the village units in Muslim and British times on the nature of the original character of their village units.

The economic aspect of feudalism in India was intimately connected with the transformation of the *śūdras*, who were treated as the common helots by the three higher *varṇas*, into peasants from the Gupta period onwards and the depression of the old peasants into semi-serfs. Evidence for the first process can be found in the account of Hsüan Tsang, who describes the *śūdras* as agriculturists, a fact confirmed by Al-Beruni about four centuries later.

The depression of the Indian peasantry in early mediaeval times can be explained by several factors, the most important of which was increase in the burden of taxation on the villagers. The Gāhaḍavāla grants mention as many as eleven taxes in the villages; if all these were realized by the state one keeps wondering whether the peasants were left with even bare subsistence. In addition to the transfer of these taxes in many cases the donees were given the right to fixed *(niyata)* and unfixed *(aniyata)*, proper *(ucita)* and improper *(anucita)* taxes. The list of taxes in many grants, for instance in the Pāla, was not exhaustive, and the grantees were authorized to collect taxes covered by the term 'et cetera' *(ādi)*, and 'all sources of income' *(sarva-āya-sameta* or *samasta-pratyāya)*. All this implies

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that the donees could make new impositions. As a result of grants the peasants no longer paid revenue to the state but rent to the grantees, most of whom being religious, did not make over any portion of it to their donors.

A second factor that undermined the position of the peasants was the imposition of forced labour. In the Maurya period slaves and hired labourers were subjected to forced labour. But from the second century A. D. it seems to have been extended to all classes of subjects. Down to the advent of the Turkish rule the grants of Western and Central India indicate the prevalence of *viṣṭi* (corvée). In Bengal and Bihar peasants were subjected to all oppressions *(sarvapīḍā)* from which exemption was granted in the villages given to religious donees by the Pālas. Occasionally imposed by the ruling chiefs upon the villagers, forced labour was bound to prove oppressive when transferred to local donees with a direct interest in the exploitation of the rural resources.

A third factor that worsened the condition of the peasants was the right of sub-infeudation. The donees were authorised to enjoy the land, to get it enjoyed, to cultivate it and get it cultivated. Some early mediaeval law-books refer to as many as four stages between the king and the actual tiller of the soil. Thus the process of sub-infeudation is attested by both the epigraphs and the *Dharmaśāstras*. The right to cultivate the land or get it cultivated also implies that of ejection. A well-established practice in Malwa, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Mahārāṣṭra, from the fifth to the twelfth century, it tended to reduce the permanent tenants to the position of tenants-at-will. It is not clear whether such a right existed in other parts of Northern India, but it seems to have been typical of the regions which were settled and fairly populated, abounding with cultivators. In backward, aboriginal areas peasants could not leave cultivation and escape to some other villages. In some parts of Central India and especially in Orissa, quite a few villages were transferred to the donees along with artisans, herdsmen and cultivators tied to the soil in the same manner as serfs in mediaeval Europe. Perhaps the practice was rendered necessary by the scarcity of working population for running rural economy.

What adversely affected the peasants in the donated areas was the transfer of communal rights, presumably from the villagers to the donees. The boundaries of many gift-villages were left undefined, which could be taken advantage of by the grantees to increase the land in their personal possession. Similarly the right to use barren land, jungles, pastures, trees, water-reservoirs, etc. could enable them to tax the peasants for using these. The transfer of such rights obviously flowed from the theory of royal ownership, but, once given to the donees, it meant practical ownership by them at the cost of customary rights enjoyed by the villagers. That there existed certain communal rights can be inferred from the fact that in Gupta times land could not be sold in Bengal without the consent of the community and that the Pālas took account formally of the wishes of the villages concerned in making their grants. Thus the transfer of agrarian rights enjoyed by the village to the grantees tended to dispossess the peasantry and created new property relations.

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The factors mentioned above may be taken as various modes of extracting services from the peasants for the benefit of either the king or his secular and religious grantees. They gave rise to relations of economic subordination from which there was no escape. But two broad phases can be discerned. In the early phase from post-Maurya times down to A. D. 750, only revenues were given to the donees, but the enumeration of concessions in later grants amounts to the transfer of proprietory rights.

The feudal order was based on self-sufficient economic units functioning in various parts of the country. This is indicated by absence of coins, prevalence of local weights and measures, and transfer of income in cash and kind from trade and industries by the kings and chiefs to the temples. The Pālas ruled for about four centuries but have hardly left any coins, so also the Gurjara-Pratīhāras and Rāṣṭrakūtas. Coins mentioned in Cāhamāna and Sena records have not been actually found. The extent of the use of coins and their bearing on economic relations in early mediaeval times is a subject worth investigation. It seems that local needs were met locally, and peasants and artisans had to be attached to the village for the purpose. Sometimes it was laid down that tax-paying artisans and peasants could not be introduced into a grant-village from outside, the idea being that grants should not disturb the self-sufficient economy of the villages. Monasteries and temples formed wide economic units comprising even more than a hundred villages. Devapāla granted five villages to Nālandā for providing articles for worship, clothing, food, bedding and medicine for the monks and the repair of the monastery. Apparently some villages supplied grain, others cloth, and still others labour for the repair of buildings; or else every village furnished part of these articles.

The historical rôle of early Indian feudalism was significant for several reasons. First, land grants served as an important means of bringing virgin soil under cultivation in Central India, Orissa and Eastern Bengal. Enterprising *brāhmaṇas* were given gainful employment in the backward, aboriginal tracts where they could spread new methods of cultivation. In the settled areas where cultivated land was granted to religious donees, they inculcated among the people a sense of broad loyalty to established order. Secondly, land grants provided the administrative mechanism for maintaining law and order in the donated areas in which all such powers were delegated to the donees. In return the grateful *brāhmaṇas* invented fictitious family trees for the ruling chiefs of the early mediaeval period, tracing their descent back to the Solar or Lunar dynasties and stressing their divine power. On the other hand secular vassals helped their lords by governing their fiefs and supplying troops in times of war. Thirdly, land grants led to the brāhmaṇisation or acculturation of the tribal people, who were given scripts, art, literature and a new way of higher life based on Sanskrit culture. In this sense feudalism worked for the integration of the country. From their original homes in Madhyadeśa and Tīrabhukti *brāhmaṇas* were invited to enjoy land grants in Bengal, Orissa and Central India, which were brought within the orbit of the same culture. At the same time grants created vested interests leading to the fragmentation of

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political authority. The vastness of the country and the difficulty of communications made it all the harder for the kings to maintain political unity. In course of time the *brāhmaṇas* and their patrons came to identify themselves with their respective localities and helped to foster local cultures, thus laying the basis for the rise of regional nationalities in the country.

Certain features of Indian feudalism remind us of its European counterpart. The grant of villages to priests may be compared to the practice of benefices given to the Church in mediaeval Europe, with the difference that *brāhmaṇas* and temples were not an organized group in India. The secular counterpart of benefices was, however, weak in early mediaeval India. Although officers were remunerated by service tenures, these formed only a very small part of the areas placed under their charge. Hence these areas were neither fiefs nor manors as in Europe; only villages donated to the *brāhmaṇas* could perhaps be regarded as such. Further, vassals in India had to render to their lord mainly military and not administrative service as in Europe. But the main characteristics of European feudalism, the existence of a self-sufficient economy and the rise of landed intermediaries leading to the depression of the peasantry, prevailed in India.

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Early Muslim Fiefs in India

S. A. Q. Husaini

Introduction

Feudalism, when it was born, was a new type of production relation in which the entire land was owned by the king and held of him by the superior classes standing in a favourable relation to the monarch. The basis of 'feudalism' was the ownership of land which enabled the ruling class to make the peasants their dependents and to exploit their labour. The princes, their relatives and nobles gradually became landed proprietors by the seizure of common lands belonging to peasant communities. The peasants in the communities, who had been impoverished by property differentiation, by frequent wars and raids made by neighbouring peoples, and by increased fines and tributes demanded by the princes, became unable to farm independently and were compelled to enter into dependent relations with the owners of the chief means of production, the land, since agriculture was the chief occupation of the people. In feudalism, according to Maitland, land could be held of the king or through an intermediate landlord. New tenancies could be created by sub-infeudation. The fundamental institution of feudalism is the fief, at once a political and economic entity. The fief is, before all else, a grant of land to the vassal with perpetual rights over the tillers of the lands and their product. The vassal is under the obligation of giving personal service to the king; for the former stands as a dependent or client of the latter. The royal beneficium and seigneurial domain granted as fief by the king is a personal grant. The sovereign owns all land in the sense that all land is held of him. Sovereignty is personal, vested in the king, and not in the state. The vassal has autonomy as to his privileges but he has no sovereignty[1]. The European feudal monarchs granted fiefs; Chingiz Khan made grants of land and people to his principal followers and supporters. "In either case the retinue or bodyguard of the ruler made an élite corps which helped to govern in peace and led the army in war."[2]

[1] F. W. Maitland, *The Constitutional History of England*, Cambridge, 1950, pp. 22–23.

[2] *Comparative studies in Society and History* (An International Quarterly), vol. I, No. 1 (October, 1958, The Hague), p. 81.

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The Indian background

As for India, feudal elements can be seen germinating even in the later stages of the emergence of private property (1000–700 B. C.), developing its rudimentary institutions through the period of consolidation and stabilization of private property (800 to 300 B. C.). The warrior class as well as the priestly order, standing in a special, favourable relation with the king, began acquiring, chiefly by grant, more and more landed property. Feudal elements appear in bolder outlines and continue to grow during the subsequent centuries (300 B. C. to 500 A. D.), and even an ill-formed or semi-feudal society emerges during the period. By the end of the 5th century A. D. all the principal elements of feudalism become clearly established although we have to wait for a few more centuries to see the end of the formation of a feudal society.

We have the evidence of the Arthaśāstra[3], Megasthenes[4], Viṣhṇu[5], Brihaspati[6] and Nārada[7] and the studies of a large number of secondary authorities like W. Foy[8] and others to establish that the king was the theoretical owner of all the land and that others held it from him. Moreover, as in all feudal societies, the Indian king possessed vast estates, royal demesnes. Most of the grants during the Epic period were in favour of the priestly class *(brāhmadeya)*. Pasenadi was a patron of the Brāhmaṇas and gave them estates out of the royal domain with powers over them as if they were kings[9]. Bimbisāra granted the village of Khānumāta to a Brāhmaṇa named Kūtadanta. The *Arthaśāstra* enjoins on the king to grant lands exempted from taxes and fines *(adaṇḍakarāni)* to the *Brāhmaṇas*[10]. We come across hundreds of grants to the Brāhmaṇas during the Gupta period, with full immunities[11]. In addition to the grants to the Brāhmaṇas and the Buddhist monasteries, lands were granted to crown officials to meet the expenses of

[3] Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, translated by R. Shamasastry, Mysore, 1923, book II, chapter I.

[4] McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, London, 1877, pp. 41–42.

[5] *Viṣhṇu Smṛiti*, English translation by Julius Jolly, Sacred Books of the East Series, Oxford, 1880, vol. III, p. 55.

[6] *Brihaspati Smṛiti*, English translation by Julius Jolly, Sacred Books of the East Series, Oxford, 1889, vol. XXVI, p. 119.

[7] *Nārada Smṛiti*, edited by Julius Jolly, Calcutta, 1885, vol. XIII, p. 51.

[8] W. Foy, *Die königliche Gewalt in den altindischen Rechtsbüchern der Dharmaśāstren*, Leipzig, 1895, pp. 58–59.

[9] Rhys Davids (Mr. and Mrs.), *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, 1899, vol. I, pp. 108, 288.

[10] *Arthaśāstra*, book V, chapter 2.

[11] See S. A. Q. Husaini, *The Economic History of India*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1962, pp. 145 sqq.

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public charities[12] and to members of the royal family[13]. Besides, land grants were made to all the servants of the state under the Mauryas and possibly under their successors also. The scheme of payment by assignment to the military and civil officers given in the *Arthaśāstra*[14] is so similar that it makes one wonder if the Mughuls copied the *manṣabdārī* system from the Mauryas. In addition to the ownership and grant of land by the king, many other elements of feudalism are observed during the Maurya and post-Maurya periods such as a few cases of sub-infeudation, rare cases of commendation, many cases of forced labour and prevalence of oppressive taxes.

Between the 6th and 10th centuries A. D. we observe the feudal forces growing steadily and culminating in the complete formation of the feudal system with a hierarchy of half-a-dozen or more degrees. At the head of the system was the *Mahārājādhirāja* who granted lands from the fiscal lands as well as from the holdings of his feudal subordinates. Next were the *Sāmantamahārājā*, the *Mahāsāmantamahārājā* and the *Sāmantadeva* who were the chief nobles of the kingdom belonging to the royal family, such as the successors of Dharsena of Valabhī, a younger brother af a Somavaṃśī king, Varāhasena's two sons and a grandson, a semi-independent ruler of Ohind[15]. On the third rung of the ladder stood the *Mahāsāmantādhipati*, the chief noble of a kingdom, e. g., Undabhata, Nirbhayanarandra, Dharnivarāha, Śāntivarman of Māthura family etc. Then came the Mahāsāmantas and Sāmantas. The next rank was occupied by the *Rānakas*, *Urgāvundas* and *Nal-gāvundas* who granted fiefs and benefices but did not issue coins. Next came the *Thakkuras*, *Rāshtrakūtas* (in a general sense), *Nāyakas* and *Bhogikas* who were petty feudal chiefs who sometimes granted benefices. On the lowest rung of the system stood the *Kuṭumbin*, usually a warrior holding some land[16].

Grants in favour of the priestly class continued to be made although the trend appears to be to bestow lands and villages more and more on religious institutions rather than persons. Many charitable institutions were established and endowed with lands[17]. Grants to members of the royal family were numerous and we get a large number of cases of military grants satisfying all the requirements of a feudal fief. We come across a greater number of cases of sub-infeudation and a few clear cases of commendation. Forced labour *(viṣṭi)* continued as of old and the levy of supplies was a recognised practice.

[12] *Epigraphia Indica*, Government of India Publication Branch, Delhi, vol. V, pp. 142–50.

[13] Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, New York, 1911, pp. 3–4. *The Jātaka*, English translation by various hands, edited by E. B. Cowell, Cambridge, 1895–1907, vol. II, pp. 237, 403; vol. V, p. 4.

[14] *Arthaśāstra*, book I, chapter 2.

[15] S. A. Q. Husaini, op. cit., p. 201.

[16] See the summary of the article, *The Formation of a Feudal Hierarchy in India*, by S. A. Q. Husaini in the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, (Aligarh Session 1960), Calcutta, 1961, p. 131.

[17] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. II, p. 224; vol. XXIII, p. 104.

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Since the inscriptions making feudal grants and literary testimony establishing such giving of fiefs are found all over India, we may take it for granted that feudalization was completed on a wide scale from Kashmīr to Tamil Nād about the same time as the process reached its culmination in Europe and several other parts of the world[18].

About 1000 A. D. there was no powerful central authority either in North India or the Deccan and the entire sub-continent of India was parcelled out among feudal lords, big and small. War was the passion of the age and a well-established and honourable industry. More wars meant more power conceded to the barons, more estates granted and more wealth earned.

Someśvara Chālukya of Kalyāna writes that before starting on an expedition the king should convene an assembly of princes, feudatories, rulers of *maṇḍalas* and eminent warriors and satisfy them with presents of gold, dresses and ornaments and encourage them by getting their praises sung[19]. Rāmapāla of Bengal before undertaking the war against Bhīma Kaivarta is reported to have pleased his *sāmantas* who had attained "great strength by possessing cavalry, elephants and infantry with presents of land and enormous wealth."[20]

Constant wars weakened the power of the rulers. Feudal chieftains gained more and more independence under weak kings. Moreover, conquerors sometimes set up new feudal baronies by endowing them out of the conquered territory. We can account for the existence of the Rāshtrakūta Mathana in Anga, Karnāta Nānyadeva in Mithilā and Vijaysena in Rādhā in this way. As it was not often possible for the successors of the conquering ruler to exercise any effective control over distant fiefs, the feudatories assumed semi-independence and in course of time complete independence.

The *Śukranītisāra* mentions the feudal forces, *agulmaka*, and the king's army commanded by his officers, *gulmibhūta*[21]. The feudal barons were held in check under strong rulers and under weak kings they indulged in private wars. Thus Dommanapāla of Khādi *maṇḍala* (Sunderbans) made war against the neighbouring *sāmantas* and broke their power[22]. In Kashmir the *dāmaras*, Janakachandra and Bhīmadeva, along with their respective adherents, started a furious fight in the reign of Uchchala[23]. Again Kīrtipāla, of Naddula, brother of Kalhaṇa, and a feudatory of the Chālukyas, fought against the feudatory Paramāras of Jalor

[18] See S. A. Q. Husaini, *The Economic History of India*, *Calcutta*, 1962, vol. I, chapters VI, VII and VIII.

[19] *Mānasollasa* edited by Shringendekāra, Gackwad, Oriental Series, Baroda, 1925, vol. 28, p. 132.

[20] Sandhyākaranandi, *Rāmcarita*, edited by R. C. Majumdar, R. G. Basak and N. G. Banerjee, Rājshāhī, Canto 1.45.

[21] *Śukranītisāra*, English translation by M. N. Dutt, Calcutta, 1896, vol. IV, pp. 7, 9 and 12.

[22] D. C. Sirkar in the *Indian Culture*, Calcutta, vol. I, p. 680.

[23] Kalhaṇa, *Rājatarangiṇī*, translated by M. A. Stein, Westminster, 1900, vol. VIII, pp. 21–32.

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and deprived them of their territory about 1180 A. D.[24] The Rajjim stone inscription records that Jagapāla, a feudatory of Jajalladeva I of the Kālachuri family of Ratanpur, struck terror into the heart of the *maṇḍaleśvaras* of Māyurika and Sāvanta and that the latter fled to the mountains[25].

Some of the powerful barons exercised not only the right to wage wars but also entered into treaties with sovereigns of other states. The Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Rānaka Lavaṇaprasāda entered into a treaty with Mahārājādhirāja Simhanadeva of Devagirī in 1232 A. D. According to this the parties agreed not to invade each other's territory, to combine in the event of invasion by a powerful enemy, and in case any noble from one kingdom fled to the other seeking refuge, to hand over the valuables in the possession of the refugee[26].

As in Europe, the feudal barons increased their power by marrying their sons and daughters in the royal family and among themselves. Jātavarman married the daughter of Karṇa, the Kālachuri king, and received the vice-royalty of Anga. This matrimonial alliance according to Prof. Mirashi led to the installation of the Varmans in the place of the Chandras in East Bengal[27]. Padmaka, the lord of Vallapura, gave his daughter in marriage to Bhiksāchara who was contesting the throne against Sussala. When conspiracies were being hatched to depose Salhana in favour of Sussala, *Dāmara* Gargachandra gave away his two daughters to the successful pretender Sussala. The latter in order to strengthen his position further married Rājalakshmī and arranged the marriage of Guṇalekha, the sister of Rājalakshmi to his son Jayasimha[28]. Such matriomonial alliances between powerful nobles were always a threat to the royal authority.

The *Śukranītisāra*[29], the *Mānasollāsa*[30] and the *Rāmacarita*[31] categorically state that the feudal chiefs helped the kings in wars. The feudal barons of Rāmapāla rallied round the latter not only in recovering Varandri but also in the victorious expeditions against Pīthī, Assam and Orissa. From the Rajjim inscription we learn that *Thakkura* Sāhilla's son Svāmin and his grandsons, as well as his great-grandson Jagapāl carried on successful wars for their masters, the Kālachuri kings of Ratanpur[32]. This should have been the general rule throughout India.

We have definite information with regard to Kashmīr that succession to the fief required the sanction of the overlord[33]. Such definite knowledge we possess in the case of the feudal lords of Kakaredikā under the Kālachuris of Tripuri[34] also.

[24] H. C. Ray, *The Dynamic History of Northern India*, 2 vols., Calcutta, 1931 and 1936, vol. II, pp. 919 and 925.
[25] *The Indian Antiquary*, Education Society Press, Bombay, edited by various hands, vol. XVII, p. 135 sqq.
[26] A. K. Majumdar, *The Chālukyas of Gujarāt*, Bombay, 1956, p. 461.
[27] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. XXIV, p. 105.
[28] *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, vol. VIII, pp. 460, 1607.
[29] *Śukranītisāra*, vol. IV, p. 7, pp. 9–21, p. 481 and pp. 514–15.
[30] *Mānasollasa*, vol. II, pp. 114–147. [31] *Rāmcarita*, vol. I, p. 45, and vol. II, p. 2.
[32] *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. XVII, pp. 136–138.
[33] *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, vol. VIII, p. 2505, p. 2741. [34] *The Indian Antiquary*, 1888, p. 229.

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In the preceding period (500 A. D. to 1000 A. D.) *rānaka* was a lesser title than *sāmanta*. In this period *rānakas* seem to be higher than *sāmantas* or at least equal to them. The title of *rānaka* was held by the Bhanjas of Khimjalimaṇḍala. Mā Dommanapāla, who was practically an independent chief in the Sena kingdom, retained the title of *rānaka* and *mahāsāmanta*, although he also styled himself *Mahārāja*, Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Lavaṇaprasāda Vīradhāvala; and Mahāmaṇḍalika Piplārāja, ruler of Kekind, held the title of *rānaka*. This title appears to have gained more and more importance until its variant *rāna* meant an independent king. Sometimes an ordinary feudal lord like Sāhilla, endowed with the status of a *thakkura*, attained the right of using the *Pancamahāśabda*[35].

Elsewhere we have enumerated seven steps in the feudal hierarchy[36]. The Mānsāsara mentions eight types of feudatories under the Sarvabhauma or Cakravartī[37]. The Śukranītisāra[38] arranges the feudal lords on the basis of their income. The *svarāṭ* had an annual income of 5,100,000 to 10,000,000 *karṣas*; the *mahārāja* had a yearly revenue of 2,100,000 to 5,000,000 *karṣas*. The *nṛipa-maṇḍalika's* income was up to 1,000,000 *karṣas* and that of a *sāmantanṛipa* up to 300,000 *karṣas*. Those who had an income of 100,000 *karṣas* were called *sāmantas*.

The *Śukranītisāra* mentions that some of the *sāmantas* received salaries from the king-emperor[39]. In Kashmīr some of the *damaras* were appointed on a salary basis by King Jayasimha[40]. Kalhaṇa definitely states that the king adopted this course to increase the army under his direct control.[41]

There appears to have been a ceremony of conferring the *pancamahāśabda* alon with a fief practised by the Valabhīs, Rāṣhṭrakūtas, Chālykyas, Gurjara-Pratihāras and the Bhanjas of Orissa. The five instruments which were associated with the *pancamahāśabda* were, according to the *Vivekachintāmani*, a horn, a timbrel, a conch, a kettledrum and a pair of cymbals[42].

On being invested with a fief, the vassals had to assume certain obligations. Under strong rulers they were not permitted to issue coins. They had to mention the name of the overlord in their inscriptions, attend the royal court on ceremonial occasions, pay regular tribute, make presents on festive occasions and when daughters were married, and send a certain number of troops[43]. In the earlier period several feudal barons mentioned the name of the overlord and some failed

[35] Rajim. Inscription dated 1145 A. D.

[36] See the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Calcutta, 1961, p. 131; and S. A. Q. Husaini, *The Economic History of India*, vol. I, pp. 200 sqq.

[37] Halayudha Bhaṭṭa. *Abhidhāna Ratnamāla*, ed. by Aufrecht, London, 1861, pp. 277–278.

[38] *Śukranītisāra*, vol. I, p. 186.

[39] Ibid., vol. I, p. 192.

[40] *Rājatarangiṇī*, vol. VIII, p. 1542.

[41] Ibid., vol. II, p. 121.

[42] *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. XII, p. 96; *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. XII, p. 255.

[43] A. S. Altekar, *State and Government in Ancient India*, Benares, 1955, p. 225.

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to do so. During this period there were more cases of omission than mention of the name of the overlord.

The power and influence of the mighty *sāmantas* undermined central authority in every kingdom. The hostile *sāmantas* of Bengal brought about the fall of Mahīpāla II. Gargachandra, a *dāmara* became the king-maker and successively installed three kings – Uchchala, Salhana and Sussala – on the throne of Kashmīr. As in other parts of the world, the Indian feudal barons of this period were always on the lookout to become independent. Hence the *Agni Purāṇa*[44] and the *Matsya Purāna*, as quoted by Mitramisra, plainly state that the *sāmantas* are to be treated as the enemies of the state[45].

Malayasimha transferred his allegiance (1211–1212 A. D.) from the Kālachuri king Vijayasimha to the Chandela king Trailokya Varman[46]. Similarly the son and grandsons of Sallaksana Varman, a chieftain of Kakaredikā and a feudatory of the Kālachuri ruler, Vijayasimha, transferred their allegiance to the same Chandela king (1239–1241 A. D.)[47]. The *Dvyāśrayakāvya* tells us that when the *sāmantas* Vijaya and Krishna were sent to oppose Vallāla, the usurper of the throne of Mālwa, they went over to the side of the latter[48]. King Kumārapāla discovered, during the course of a campaign against the Chāhmāna ruler, Arnorāja, that his barons had been bribed by the enemy[49].

Thus India at the time of the Muslim conquest was a fully developed feudal country like Europe.

The Middle Eastern background

The Muslim invaders who conquered India towards the end of the 12th century had some knowledge and experience of feudal institutions.

Very early in the history of Mesopotamia the king granted charters of immunity by which "the king would give over such rights upon the lands in question as the collection of various levies, assessments and taxes, the corvée upon the dykes and canals, water and pasture rights and the right of military protection."[50] We are also informed that these benefices became hereditary, at least in some cases.[51] Cities and villages were parcelled out as benefices to deserving officials subject to rendering military service. "The great king Nebu-

[44] *Agni Purāṇa*, English translation by M. N. Dutt, Calcutta, 1901, vol. 14, ch. 233.
[45] Chandesvara, *Rajanitiratnakara*, ed. by K. P. Jayaswal, Patna, 1924, p. 277.
[46] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. XXV, p. 4.
[47] *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. XVII, pp. 230–36.
[48] *Dvyāśrayakāvya*, edited by Ābājī Vishnu Kāthevāte, Bombay, 1915, p. 19, p. 98.
[49] A. K. Majumdar, *The Chaulukyas of Gujarāt*, pp. 105–106.
[50] A. T. Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, New York, 1923, p. 512.
[51] *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. II, edited by J. B. Bury and others, Cambridge, 1931, p. 244.

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chadnezzar I (c. 590 B. C.), as a reward for meritorious military service, granted to one of his captains of the charioteers a march on the dangerous Elamite frontier. The villages in this march were granted immunity from all crown taxes and levies and the inhabitants were freed from the incidence of arrest by imperial officers and from the billeting of soldiers. In the same reign similar immunities were bestowed upon lands granted to certain priests in the name of their god."[52]

About the social organisation of Canaanite society under the Egyptian empire, Wright and Filson write that it was "a feudal system with a king and an aristocracy of partly foreign 'chariot warriors' at the top, while at the bottom was a lower class of serfs and slaves. An independent and energetic class was non-existent."[53]

When the Parthian ruler Mithridates I carried his victorious arms through the Caspian Gates westward to create the Parthian empire, the region invaded consisted of a large number of disorganised small independent states each with its own ruling dynasty. Some of these states, such as Persis and Sacastene, were left in the control of their native houses and assumed the status of dependent kingdoms or duchies, enjoying the rights of coinage etc. Over some states, the Parthians installed *marzbāns* who resembled the Carolingian counts.

Famous families such as the Suren, Karin, Gewparthrān, Mihrān, and Aspahbād existed. At least some of them were Parthian in origin and had been endowed with large estates by the Parthian kings incident upon conquest. The Suren possessed vast holdings in Mesopotamia, the Karin near Nihāwand, the Mihrān near Rhagae in Media, and the Gewparthrān in Hyrcania. "It is hard not to make the comparison between Parthian nobility and the Frankish and Teutonic aristocracy of the ninth and tenth centuries."[54]

The greater nobility possessed large landed estates which, on the Armenian analogy, were granted by the king along with general powers of government and specific public offices, both the estates and political authority tending to become hereditary.

Many of the Parthian feudal institutions appear to have survived the centralization under the Sāssānian regime. The nobility as such, the *vaspuhrān*, still retained their ancestral lands, upon which their residences stood, as well as other scattered holdings in different parts of the empire. The Arabs conquered Persia in the earlier half of the seventh century. Yet some of the great Persian families continued till the tenth century, still endowed with their estates and certain administrative posts. "So well established were these noble Persian houses that, as is well known, they not only retained their standing in the new world of Islam, but helped appreciably to mould that world."[55]

[52] I. R. Coulborn, *Feudalism in History*, Princeton, 1956, p. 99.
[53] Wright and Filson, *The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible*, Philadelphia, 1945, p. 36.
[54] *Feudalism in History*, p. 112.
[55] Ibid., p. 116.

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About 1100 A. D. a Latin kingdom was established in Palestine with many of the feudal institutions of Europe. The Muslims of the Middle East, who had been in contact with and fighting against the crusaders since 1095 A. D., should have known much about European feudalism in addition to possessing a detailed knowledge of the feudal organisation of their own countries.

The Ghaznawid and Ghūrid conquerors of India came from a region which was a part of the ancient Persian empire, and hence should have been fully conversant with the feudal institutions of that empire with an ancient culture and civilization.

By the time the Turko-Afghāns conquered India feudal land tenure was already widespread in the country and princes and their relatives had acquired extensive demesnes. The bulk of the lands was held by the warrior class which was bound to render military service to the ruler. So a system of conditional land tenure had come to stay. The extent of lands held from the king grew rapidly during the subsequent centuries and a larger number of peasants came under feudal exploitation in one way or another. The new rulers could not reverse the progress of historical forces, even if they had wanted to do so. This is clearly established by the failure of the mighty Balban. The Turko-Afghāns came to loot and exploit, as tersely put by Abū Tammām[56], the Arab poet.

"No, not for Paradise didst thou the nomad life forsake;
Rather, I believe, it was thy yearning for bread and dates."

The feudal way of ruthless domination and intense exploitation suited them best.

Early Muslim fiefs in India

The scholar who understood the real significance of the social and economic institutions of India during the Turko-Afghān Period and characterized them as feudal (even as early as about a century ago) was Maxim Kovalevski, a friend of Sir Henry Maine. The Russian writer has devoted the entire sixth chapter of his book to Muslim India and given a brief but excellent account of the land-grant system.[57] According to him, the distinctive land policy of the new conquerors was the granting of *iqṭā's*. Kovalevski equates the *iqṭā'* with the benefice of Western Europe. The Sulṭāns granted districts and distributed villages to their nobles, courtiers and officers on condition that they supplied, upon demand, a stipulated number of troops. Thus the grants were conditional and as long as the *iqṭā'dār* (grantee) fulfilled the condition, he could appropriate the entire revenue from the area granted to him. Meanwhile, the villagers continued to own the land – either

[56] Abū Tammām, *Dīwānu 'l-Ḥamāsah*, edited as *Ash'āru 'l-ḥamāsah* by G. Freytag, Bonn, 1828, supplemented by the commentary of Tibrīzī in 2 vols., Bonn, 1847–51, vol. I, p. 795.

[57] M. Kovalevski, *Obščinoe zemlevladenie, pričiny, chodi i posledstvija ego razloženii*, Moscow, 1879. Extracts from chapter VI given in English in *Feudalism in History*.

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as a community or as individuals – as before. Gradually, by a process of commendation, the 'free landowners' of the village "lost their independence, and therewith their allodial tenure."

During the Sultanate of Delhi (1192–1526 A. D.), the *iqṭāʿdārs* strove to make and succeeded in making their fiefs hereditary. Kovalevski cites Balban's effort and failure to resume the grants of those who could not take the field in person. I have given below the full details of the incident which are furnished by Baranī. All the regulations of Balban in this regard were made at one and the same time and all of them were cancelled simultaneously. Balban bowed to inevitable and did not "strike back". The Sulṭāns of Delhi, who followed Balban, generally confirmed the existing *iqṭāʿdārs*. Kovalevski is quite right when he holds that in the reign of Fīrūz Shāh (1351–1388) hereditability of the fiefs received legislative sanction. Fīrūz took positive measures to ensure the indisputable transfer of *iqṭāʿs* from the original grantees to their heirs. Further he granted fiefs to the soldiers as well under the plea of making permanent provision for all Muslim families. Even civilian Muslims were granted *iqṭāʿs* for one reason or another. Thus in the reign of Fīrūz Shāh, "there was completed in India the same transformation in the feudal system as in the Carolingian, the monarchy connected with the name of Charles the Bald. Like the benefices, the *iqṭāʿs* became hereditary" (Kovalevski, Chapter VI). During the Parhān period, according to Kovalevski, "beneficial tenure" got entrenched. The system of feudal grants was the chief mode of paying the military officers under the Turko-Afghān conquerors of India.

Before the conquest of ʿIrāq, Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghaznā had granted Hirāt and Khurāsān in fief to his son Masʿūd. When the Sulṭān conquered ʿIrāq, the prince was given the whole of that country (the ʿIrāq) as his fief. Masʿūd added Rayy, Qazwīn, Hamadān and Taram (in Lāristān) by conquest. He subjugated Daylamān as well[58].

Sulṭān Muḥammad Ghūrī gave his brother, Sulṭān Saʿīd, the fief of Tiginābād which lies between Ghaznā and Ghur[59]. Malik Ḍiyā'u'd-Dīn was the fiefholder of Ghūr, Sulṭān Bahā'u'd-Dīn Sām of Bamiyān, Sulṭān Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Muḥammad of Fīrūz Kōh and Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Ḥarb of Sijistān. Malik Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn held Mādiyān[60]. Multān and Uchh were granted to ʿAlī Karmakh[61]. Later, he got Lahore. Multān and Ucch were granted to Qabācha[62]. Sarhind was bestowed on Ḍiyā'u 'd-Dīn Tūlakī[63]. Quṭbu 'd-Dīn Aybak was given the fief of Kuhrām[64]. The

[58] Minhāju 'd-dīn ʿUthmān, *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, edited by Nassau Lees and two others, Bibliotheca Indica Series, Calcutta, 1864, p. 93.
[59] Ibid., p. 115.
[60] Ibid., pp. 121 sqq.
[61] Yaḥyāb in Aḥmad, *Tārīkh-i-Mubārāk Shāhī*, edited by M. Hidayat Hosain, Bibliotheca Indica Series, Calcutta, 1931, pp. 6 and 7.
[62] *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, pp. 121 sq.
[63] *Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārakshāhī*, p. 7.
[64] Ibid., p. 13.

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fief of Tāju' d-Dīn Yildiz was Ghaznā and that of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn 'Iwaz Khaljī was Lakhnauti. Malik Ruknu 'd-Dīn Sūr held Kaydān. Later, Quṭbu 'd-Dīn was granted the fief of Lahore. Bahā'u 'd-Dīn Ṭughril got the fief of Thankar in the region of Bayānah. Later he obtained the fort of Kalyūr (Kālēr) from Sulṭān Mu'izzu 'd-Dīn Sām. On the complaint of the residents of Kalyūr, the Sulṭān gave that fort to Quṭbu'd-Dīn Aybak[65]. On that account there crept in some misunderstanding between the two nobles[66]. Īltutmish held the fiefs of Kalyūr (Kālēr)[67], Baran (Bulandshahr)[68] and Badā'ūn[69] in succession. He accompanied Sulṭān Quṭbu 'd-Dīn with the forces of Badā'ūn to Ghaznā.

Under Sulṭān Īltutmish, his eldest son Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd was made the ruler of Bengal (Lakhnauti), and after the prince, Bengal was bestowed on 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn Jānī[70]. Prince Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd, son of Īltutmish, received Hānsī as his fief. In 623 A. H. (1226 A. D.) he was given the barony of Awad[71]. Malik 'Izzu' d-Dīn Muḥammad Sālār obtained Badā'ūn in 625 A. H.[72]. Lahore was the fief of Malik 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn[73]. 'Izzu 'd-Dīn Kabīr Khān Ayāz was granted Multān and its adjoining territory in 625 A. H. (1228 A. D.)[74]. In two or three years he got Palūl also. Malik Sayfu 'd-Dīn Kūchī held Hānsī[75]. Malik Ikhtiyāru 'd-Dīn Altūniya held the barony of Sarhind[76]. Badru 'd-Dīn Sunqar was given the fief of Badā'ūn and Malik Qarāqush held Lahore[77]. Malik 'Izzu 'd-Dīn Ṭughril Khān was given Badā'ūn. Then he was given the fief of Bihār which fell vacant on the transfer of Yaghāntat to Lakhnauti[78]. Malik Ikhtiyāru 'd-Dīn Aytigin was given Manṣūrpur as his fief. After a time he got Kūjah and Nandana[79]. Qamaru 'd-Dīn Qirān Tamar Khān was given Khanauj and thereafter he got Karah[80]. Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Kazlak Khān held the fief of Kuhrām. After the death of Qabācha he got Ucch and its adjoining territories[81]. Malik Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Aytamar was a slave of Tughril. The latter transferred his fief of Lahore to the former. In the year 625 A. H. Aytamar obtained the *wilāyat* of Swālik, Ajmer, Buwah, Kabulī and Sambar Namak[82]. Īltutmish bestowed the *iqṭā'* of Baran on Malik Sayfu 'd-Dīn Aybak Kashli Khān, elder brother of Balban. Then he was granted the city and fort of Ucch[83]. The same monarch gave the *iqṭā'* of Sarsatı to Malik Sayfu 'd-Dīn and then the whole of Lakhnauti[84].

Sulṭān Ruknu 'd-Dīn Fīrūz received, as a prince, the *iqṭā'* of Badā'ūn in 625 A. H. (1228 A. D.). Then he got Lahore. After he became the Sulṭān in 1236, Lahore was given to Malik 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn and Badā'ūn to Nāṣiru 'd-Dın Tughān Khān[85].

[65] *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, pp. 121 sq.
[66] Ibid., p. 145. [67] Ibid., p. 169. [68] Ibid. [69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid. p. 174; *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī* p. 19.
[71] *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, p. 180. [72] *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī* p. 22. [73] Ibid.
[74] *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, p. 234. [75] *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī* p. 22.
[76] Ibid., p. 27. [77] Ibid. p. 30. [78] *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, p. 242.
[79] Ibid., p. 253. [80] Ibid., p. 244. [81] Ibid., p. 245.
[82] Ibid., p. 236. [83] Ibid., p. 238.
[84] Ibid., p. 239. [85] Ibid., pp. 178, 181, 182 and 183.

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Ruknu 'd-Dīn gave Bayānah to Qarāqush Khān. Later the noble obtained Karah[86]. The Sulṭān added Sunām to the fief of Malik Kabīr Khān[87].

After the accession of Razīyah (1236–1240 A. D.), Kabīr Khān Ayāz, who deserted the nobles to join the queen, was granted the fief of Lahore[88]. Razīyah granted Khanauj to Qamaru 'd-Dīn Tamar Khān. Then he got Karah[89] and thereafter Awad and its adjuncts[90]. Razīyah gave to Malik Hindu Khān Mubārak the district of Uech and its fort[91]. The same ruler granted Baran (Bulandshahr) to Malik Ikhtiyāru 'd-Dīn Altūniya. Then he was transferred to Tabarhind[92]. Malik Aytigin was given the fief of Badā'ūn[93]. Malik Bahā'u 'd-Dīn Sunqar is also reported to have held Badā'ūn under Razīyah perhaps after Aytigin[94]. Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Sanjar held Baran under Razīyah. Later he was made the fiefholder of Sarsatī[95]. After the death of Khwājah Muḥazzibu 'd-Dīn, the fief of Baran was given to Tāju 'd-Dīn Sanjar Qurbat Khān. Later he became the fiefholder of Awad[96]. Tāju 'd-Dīn Arsalān Khān got the fief of Bilāram[97].

Sulṭān Mu'izzu 'd-Dīn Bahrām (1240–1242 A. D.) granted Malik Hindu Khān Mubārak the fief of Jullundur[98] and the *iqṭā'* of Rewārī to Malik Baha'u 'd-Dīn Balban[99]. Malik Qarāqush was given the fief of Bayānah and thereafter that of Karah[100].

Sulṭān 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn Mas'ūd (1242–1246 A. D.) granted Tabarhind to Malik Ikhtiyāru 'd-Dīn Yūzbak Ṭughril Khān. Then Lahore became his fief. He revolted but he was pardoned and granted Khanauj. He again revolted and obtained Awad[101]. Nāgpur, Mandāwar and Ajmer were granted as fiefs to Malik 'Izzu 'd-Dīn Balban, and the districts of Badā'ūn to Tāju 'd-Dīn Sanjar Qutlugh[102]. Kol (Aligarh) became the fief of Muḥazzibu'd-Dīn[103] Qamaru 'd-Dīn Qirān Tamar Khān held Awad. Tughān Khān 'Izzu 'd-Dīn Ṭughril held Lakhnauti[104]. Hānsī became the *iqṭā'* of Ulugh Khān-i-Mu'aẓẓam (Balban)[105]. Malik Jalālu 'd-Dīn who was the brother of Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn was granted the region of Khanauj and Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn, who was then a prince, obtained Bahrāich. These two were the uncles of Sulṭān 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn Mas'ūd[106]. Jalālu 'd-Dīn Fīrūz Khaljī held the fief of Karah[107]. Malik Sanjar Aybak got Kuhrām[108]. Nuṣratu 'd-Dīn Shēr Khān Sunqar (cousin of Balban) was granted Tabarhind and Lahore. He seized Uech from Malik 'Izzu 'd-Dīn Balban, and became the master of the whole of Sind[109]. Arsalān Khān got Awad[110].

During the reign of Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd, Jalālu 'd-Dīn, the brother of the Sulṭān, who had been holding Khanauj, was granted the fief of Badā'ūn and

[86] Ibid., p. 250. [87] Ibid., p. 235. [88] Ibid., pp. 239–40.
[89] Ibid., p. 235. [90] Ibid., p. 250. [91] Ibid., p. 247.
[92] Ibid. ,p. 249. [93] Ibid., p. 253. [94] Ibid., p. 254.
[95] Ibid., p. 256. [96] Ibid., p. 258. [97] Ibid., p. 265.
[98] Ibid., p. 249. [99] Ibid., p. 286. [100] Ibid., p. 250.
[101] Ibid., p. 262. [102] Ibid., p. 198. [103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid., p. 198. [105] Ibid., p. 199. [106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid., p. 206. [108] Ibid. [109] Ibid., p. 277.
[110] Ibid., p. 278.

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Sambal[111]. Bayānah became the fief of Qutlugh Khān[112]. In the year 651 A. H. (1253 A. D.), Ulugh Khān-i-Muʿaẓẓam (Sulṭān Balban) was sent back to his barony of Swālik and Hānsī. Thereafter, he was transferred to Nāgaur[113]. Kishlī Khān was sent back from the court to his fief[114]. Ulugh Mubārak Aybak was granted the *iqṭāʿ* of Karah[115]. Hānsī was granted to Shāhzāda Ruknu 'd-Dīn[116]. Lahore was granted to Malik Jalālu 'd-Dīn in accordance with a treaty after his revolt[117]. Qutlugh Khān had secretly married the Queen Mother. Both were sent to Awad which was bestowed on them as their fief[118]. In 652 A. H. Arsalān Khān, the fief-holder of Tabarhind, Ban (Bat) Khān of Sunām and Manṣūrpur, Balban (Sulṭān) of Swālik and Nāgaur and Malik Jalālu 'd-Dīn Mas'ūd, son of Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn who held Lahore, combined against the court favourite, ʿImādu 'd-Dīn Rayḥān. He was removed from the *wakālat* (chief ministership) and sent back to his fief of Badā'ūn[119]. In the year 653 A. H. (1255 A. D.) Meerut was given to Malik Kishlī Khān Ulugh-i-Aʿẓam Bārbak-i-Sulṭānī[120]. Shēr Khān was given the fief of Bayānah, Kol, Bilāram and Kalyūr (Kālēr)[121]. Malik Sayfu 'd-Dīn Ban (Bat) Aybak was given the fiefs of Kuhrām and Samānah. Later he was given Baran[122]. Malik Ikhtiyāru 'd-Dīn Qarāqush Khān Aytigin held the fief of Bīrbhūm and Darankun[123]. For some time, perhaps before the grant to Shēr Khān, Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Arsalān Khān Sanjar Khwārizmī held the fief of Bayānah[124]. Then he was given Karah[125]. Malik ʿIzzu 'd-Dīn Balban Kishlu Khān obtained Ucch and Multān from Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd[126]. Later he got Badā'ūn and its adjuncts[127]. Malik Nuṣrat Khān Bahā'u 'd-Dīn Ṣūfī Rūmī was granted the fief of Palūl and Kamah. Kark was given to him later[128]. Malik Nuṣratu 'd-Dunyā wa 'd-Dīn Shēr Khān Sunqar held Tabarhind and Lahore as his fiefs[129]. Malik Bahā'u 'd-Dīn Balban (Sulṭān) obtained the *iqṭāʿ* of Hānsī[130]. Malik Kishlī Khān Sayfu 'd-Dīn Aybak, elder brother of (Sulṭān) Balban was granted Nāgaur which was taken away from ʿIzzu 'd-Dīn Balban Kishlu Khān by Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Later he was given the fief of Meerut which he held until his death[131]. Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Sanjar Tabar Khan was the fiefholder of Janjanah. He accompanied Balban to Nāgaur. He was granted the fiefs of Kasmandi and Mandyānah by Balban (a case of sub-infeudation). After return to the court he got Baran. Thence he was transferred to Awad. For a time he was sent to Bayānah for *ḍabt*. Thereafter he returned to Awad which was his fief[132].

At the time when Balban gained the ascendancy, he held Nāgaur, Swālik, Sarsatī, Jaynad, Barwalah and their adjuncts[133]. Qutlugh Khān, the husband of the Queen Mother, was granted Lakhnauti. A relative of Balban, Arsalān Khān Sanjar

[111] Ibid., p. 212.
[112] Ibid., p. 216.
[113] Ibid., p. 217.
[114] Ibid., p. 299.
[115] Ibid., p. 217.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid., p. 219. .
[118] Ibid., p. 220.
[119] Ibid., pp. 300--302.
[120] Ibid., p. 220.
[121] Ibid., p. 226.
[122] Ibid., p. 259.
[123] Ibid., p. 250.
[124] Ibid., p. 266.
[125] Ibid., p. 267.
[126] Ibid., p. 270.
[127] Ibid., p. 271.
[128] Ibid., p. 277.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid., p. 286.
[131] Ibid., p. 280.
[132] Ibid., pp. 260–61.
[133] Ibid., p. 305.

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Chasht, was granted the fief of Karah[134]. On the recommendation of Balban, Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn granted Kol, Jalesar, and the region of Kalyūr to Shēr Khān, the son of the maternal uncle of (Sulṭān) Balban[135]. The former fiefholder of Laknauti, 'Izzu 'd-Dīn Balban, received an equal fief from the Sulṭān[136].

Soon after the death of Muḥammad ibn Sām, there was a dispute among his nobles for the succession and ultimately Quṭbu 'd-Dīn succeeded to his Indian territory. Such disputes became a permanent feature, and there were very few peaceful successions during the Slave and Khaljī periods.

There is absolutely no doubt that fiefs were the only mode of payment under the Slave Kings of India. Scores of fiefs are mentioned in the literature of the period, and no case of cash payment occurs. All military officers were granted fiefs. A case is mentioned in which the Queen Mother (of Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd) and her second husband Qutlugh Khān were granted the fief of Awad[137] and later that of Lakhnauti. A child prince, Shāhzāda Ruknu 'd-Dīn, was granted the fief of Hānsī[138]. On several occasions Minhāj Sirāj acted as a Qāḍī and every time he enjoyed the usufruct of a fief attached to the office. The author was granted private fiefs by two nobles. In the reign of Mu'izzu 'd-Dīn Bahrām (1240–1242 A. D.) Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Sanjar Qutlugh granted a fief to Minhaj Sirāj in the barony of Badā'ūn[139]. During the reign of Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd, the same author obtained a village in the region of Hānsī yielding 3,000 *jitals* a year as *in'ām* from Ulugh Khān-i-Mu'aẓẓam (who later became Sulṭān Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Balban) for an ode which he wrote in praise of the exploits of the noble[140]. Sulṭān Razīyah is reported to have given away a large number of villages to maintain the college or university (*Madrasat-i-Nāṣirīyah*) which she founded[141]. Thus royalty, the nobility, the officials, scholars, and institutions were all paid in the form of fiefs.

It is also certain that great fiefs were granted for the duration of office and that the transfer of fiefholders was common. A bigger fief meant more income. There was no question of fixed salaries to be drawn from the fiefs, the balance being paid into the treasury. The normal transfers were from smaller units to bigger ones. If transfers were made from larger fiefs to smaller ones, or if portions of a fief were taken away, there was resentment and sometimes revolt. When Sulṭān Mu'izzu 'd-Dīn Sām transferred Kālēr from Tughril to Quṭbu 'd-Dīn, there arose some misunderstanding between the two nobles[142]. If the additional fief did not mean additional money, there should have been no ground for misunderstanding.

"During the reign of Iltutmish the leading Turks formed themselves into a college of Forty, which divided among its members all the great fiefs of the empire and all the highest offices in the state. The commanding genius of Iltutmish

[134] Ibid., p. 312. [135] Ibid., p. 313. [136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid., p. 220. [138] Ibid., p. 217. [139] Ibid., p. 249.
[140] Ibid., pp. 211, 295.
[141] Ibid., p. 200. [142] Ibid., p. 145.

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preserved the royal dignity intact, but in the reigns of his children the power of the Forty was ever increasing."[143] All of them, former slaves of the Sulṭān, had become Khāns (commanders of 10,000 horses). All the free nobles of the court of Iltutmish were liquidated and the Forty became great almost simultaneously and claimed equality in respect of fiefs, followings and status. Each of them was haughty and assertive and refused to obey another[144].

During this heyday of feudal anarchy certain feudal practices became established. Even as early as the days of Sulṭān Iltutmish, Ṭughril transferred his fief of Lahore to his slave Aytamar, maybe with the consent or acquiescence of the Sulṭān. There is a remarkable case during the reign of Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Maḥmūd. Qutlugh Khān, the husband of the Queen Mother, was granted the fief of Lakhnauti which had been held by ʿIzzu 'd-Dīn Balban, the ambitious Turk who had attempted to succeed Muʿizzu 'd-Dīn Bahrām. The Sulṭān had to find an equal fief for the displaced noble[145].

Private war among the nobles and the seizure of one another's territory under the very nose of the Sulṭān is observed. Kabīr Khān Ayāz seized Multān by force from Malik Qarāqush in the reign of Sulṭān Razīyah[146]; and during the rule of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn Mas ʿūd Nuṣratu 'd-Dīn Sher Khān Sunqar seized Ucch from Malik ʿIzzu 'd-Dīn Balban[147]. In the same reign Malik Ikhtiyāru 'd-Dīn Yūzbak revolted again and again until he was granted the prize fief of Awad[148]. During the reign of Sulṭān Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn, Malik Jalālu 'd-Dīn revolted against the monarch and obtained the fief of Lahore in accordance with the terms of a treaty[149].

The most important feudal factor of which we get a glimpse from the scanty materials of this period is the institution of sub-infeudation. We have seen that two villages were granted to Minhāj Sirāj by two different nobles at various times. When Ulugh Khān-i-Muʿaẓẓam (Balban) was sent to Nāgaur, Malik Tāju 'd-Dīn Sanjar Tabar Khān followed him thither. Balban granted him the fiefs of Karmandi and Mandyānah[150].

Ḥusāmu 'd-Dīn Ughulbak held Awad of Sultān Quṭbu 'd-Dīn Aybak[151] with his headquarters at Gankarah in the *sarkār* of Tanda. He assigned the *parganahs* of Bhuili (*Sihli*) and Bhagawat (*Sihlat*) to Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī[152]. With his small fief as the nucleus Muḥammad carved out a respectable kingdom and granted substantial fiefs to his lieutenants. ʿAlī Mardān held the fief of Barsul (Barsala in the *sarkār* of Ghorāghāt). Muḥammad Shīrān's fief consisted of Santosh and Moseda in the *sarkār* of Bārbakābād. Muʿtamidu 'd-Dawlah held the territory

[143] *The Cambridge History of India*, vol. III, edited by Sir Wolseley Haig, Delhi, 1958, p. 62.

[144] Ḍiyā'u'd-dīn Baranī, *Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrūzshāhī*, edited by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān, Bibliotheca Indica Series, Calcutta, 1862, pp. 27–28.

[145] *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, p. 313.

[146] Ibid., p. 235. [147] Ibid., p. 277. [148] Ibid., p. 262.

[149] Ibid., p. 219. [150] Ibid., pp. 260–61.

[151] Ibid., p. 147. [152] Ibid.

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between Devkot and Bangaon (Bekanwah) which was a *mahal* in the *sarkār* of Bārbakābād[153].

Moreover, with the development of feudalism accompanied by a long succession of weak rulers from 1236 to 1266 A. D. there appeared many defects of the feudal system which were sure to undermine the military might of the empire. The Mongols were on the march. They had overrun the Muslim world from the borders of China to the frontiers of Syria, had sacked Baghdād and killed the Caliph. They could enter India any day.

Balban by adopting a series of measures curbed the power of the Forty and raised himself head and shoulders above the rest; and by enhancing the power and dignity of royalty, isolated himself from his former compeers[154]. He claimed to be a descendant of Afrāsiyāb and ordered that no low-born person should approach his majesty, whatever might be his skill and attainment[155]. He eliminated dangerous nobles by poison and destroyed a large number of powerful men using the sword or poison, in secret or in public, by means fair or foul, through starvation or thirst, by hurling down from heights, by drowning or burning alive[156].

One of the Forty was Balban. Another was Shēr Khān, son of Balban's maternal uncle. His barony consisted of Sunām, Lahore, Dipālpur and other townships which lay in the way of the Mongols. He defeated the invaders from Mongolia several times and was a terror to them. He was eliminated by Balban through poison[157]. Tamar Khān, another of the Forty, who held Sunām (perhaps after Shēr Khān) and Samānah and rendered great services against the Mongols was also poisoned by Balban[158].

On ascending the throne of Delhi, Balban found that the fiefholders of the Shamsī period (1211–1266 A. D.) were not maintaining the required forces. He issued orders that the records of all the fiefholders should be placed before him, so that he might investigate the cases and pass suitable orders. It was found that the number of soldiers to be maintained was considerably reduced in most cases, that the original grantees had been substituted by their heirs, that in many cases, instead of the fiefholders' sons representing their fathers in the army, slaves were substituted even where there were sons. Some of the fiefholders absented themselves from the muster for genuine reasons and some others sent presents to the *Dīwān-i-ʿArḍ* (Military Department) in the form of wine, goats, hens, pigeons, ghee or grain from their villages and kept away from the muster[159].

Balban classified the fiefholding soldiers into their categories and gave orders in respect to each of them. (1) Those who were old and decrepit were given a pension of 40 to 50 *tankahs* and their fiefs were resumed and included in the *Khāliṣah* (fiscal land). (2) The salaries of those who were middle-aged or young were fixed

[153] The *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī* (p. 158) mentions Devkot as the fief of Muḥammad Shīrān. Could it be possible that Shīrān held the title of Muʿtamidu 'd-Dawlah? See the *History of Bengal*, vol. II, p. 20.

[154] Baranī, *Taʾrīkh-i-Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 30.

[155] Ibid., pp. 37–38. [156] Ibid., pp. 47–48.

[157] Ibid., pp. 47–48. [158] Ibid. [159] Ibid., p. 62.

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according to their merits, and they were required to pay the excess revenue from their fiefs into the treasury. Their fiefs were not confiscated. (3) As for those fiefholders who were orphan children or widows and sent slaves as substitutes, their fiefs were resumed and included in the *Khālişah*. Provision was made for them from the revenue of their former fiefs.

There was great weeping and wailing in the city of Delhi. The old and prominent fiefholders assembled in a meeting and marched to the house of *Maliku 'l-Umarā'* Fakhru 'd-Dīn Kotwāl and started weeping and wailing. They said, "From the reign of Iltutmish to our own days more than 50 years have elapsed. The lands between the two rivers (Ganga and Jumna) were our fiefs. We have been considering the villages given to us by that ruler as *in'ām* (tax-free grants in perpetuity). Our wives, children and we ourselves have been subsisting on them. To the best of our ability we have been furnishing soldiers, horses and armour to the *Dīwān-i-'Arḍ* of the empire and rendering service to the Sulṭān. Those among us who are strong enough to serve in the army go along with it. We did not know that in our old age we would be dispossessed and that the widows and orphans of former commanders and famous courtiers would be awarded a pension of 20 or 30 *tankahs*, that young and middle-aged men (alone) would be called upon to serve as soldiers and furnish horses and weapons, that after the lapse of two-quarters of a century the villages granted by Sulṭān Shamsu 'd-Dīn (Iltutmish) would be returned to the treasury and that we would be thrown on the streets." They explained their difficulties to the *Maliku 'l-Umarā'* and sought his intercession[160].

The *Maliku 'l-Umarā'* took pity on them and tears filled his eyes. He went to the Sulṭān in the clothes which he was wearing in his house and stood before the Sulṭān pensive and dejected. The Sulṭān, finding that the *Maliku 'l-Umarā'* was in mental distress, enquired, "Fakhru 'd-Dīn, why are you so pensive and dejected?" The *Maliku 'l-Umarā'* replied, "I have heard that in the *Dīwān-i-'Arḍ-i-Mamālik* old people are being thrown out and their means of sustenance being resumed. I am apprehensive (about my future) and on that account I am sad. I said to myself, "On the day of resurrection, if old men are rejected and refused a place in Heaven, what will happen to me who have become old and decrepit?"[161]

Sulṭān Balban understood that he was recommending the case of the fiefholders. Information about the discontent among the fiefholders should have reached the Sulṭān from other sources as well. As a matter of fact to dispense with the system of granting fiefs in perpetuity would be against the economic necessity of the period and hence going against the powerful current of historical forces. Balban bowed before the inevitable. He summoned the officials of the *Dīwān-i-'Arḍ* and issued orders confirming the fiefs of all the old grantees and cancelling the decree classifying the fiefs into three categories. He further ordered that matters should continue as they were before the classification decree[162]. Baranī reports that up to the last days of Jalālu 'd-Dīn Fīrūz Khaljī (1296), many leaders of the fiefholders used to

[160] Ibid., pp. 63–64.
[161] Ibid., p. 64. [162] Ibid.

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stand before the Khaljī monarch and pray for Sulṭān Balban and *Maliku 'l-Umarā'* Fakhru 'd-Dīn Kotwāl[163].

Muḥammad Khān, Balban's eldest son, who had held Kol (Aligarh) and a few districts around it since a few years before the accession of Balban, was granted the entire region of Sind as his fief[164]. The fief of Muḥammad Khān (Khān Shahīd) was 600 × 600 *kurūh* in extent (1,440,000 sq. miles)[165] and his son Kaikhusraw succeeded to this enormous barony[166]. Muḥammad Khān, when he was the fief-holder (baron or duke) of Sind sent from that region Bahrajī and Arabian horses[167]. Balban gave Bengal to his younger son: from there he received a regular supply of elephants[168]. Malik Shihābu 'd-Dīn held Awad[169]. Balban had a large number of reliable courtiers and famous barons (*maliks*) around him. He granted big baronies to them and to his own sons[170]. Moreover, he is reported to have parcelled out the remaining *Khāliṣah* land in the Dōāb (the area between the Ganga and the Jumna) into fiefs which he distributed among his Afghān nobles[171].

Altagir, the long-haired, who was also called Amīn Khān, held Awad[172] in fief of Sulṭān Balban. When he was killed at the hands of Ṭughril Khān, Balban moved out of his capital, divided Samānah and Sunām into big *shiqqs* (literally "parts") and distributed them among the *amīrs* (commanders of hundreds) and soldiers of Samānah and Sunām (as additional inducement to guard the rear against any possible Mongol attack) and then marched towards Lakhnauti[173]. Malik Tūzakī was the fiefholder of Baran (Bulandshahr) and Malik Shāhik of Multan[174].

From the foregoing details it is quite clear that the chief mode of paying the soldiers by the Muslim conquerors of India was by granting fiefs, that by the time of Balban corrupt practices had entered the system, that the great autocrat attempted to resume the fiefs, that he failed and that he was himself forced to grant a large number of fiefs to his sons, other military commanders and soldiers. A wrong account bordering on deliberate distortion has been given by Daniel Thorner who writes, "The Sultan struck back hard by ordering those *iqṭā'dārs* who were incapable of bearing military service deprived of their holdings. He also resumed those grants which, upon the death of *iqṭā'dārs* had passed into the hands of minors."[175]

The learned author appears to have written his article with only the works of Kovalevski, Tod and Moreland before him and does not appear to have given a reading to Baranī even in the selective translation of Elliot and Dowson. I have given above the version of Baranī, the sole authority, and hence the less said about the distortion the better. However, I must point out that this wrong account is likely to do great havoc, if it has not already done considerable harm.

[163] Ibid. [164] Ibid., p. 66.
[165] *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī*, p. 52.
[166] Ibid., p. 52. [167] Baranī, p. 53. [168] Ibid.
[169] *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī*, p. 41.
[170] Baranī, p. 25. [171] Ibid., p. 57.
[172] Ibid., p. 84. [173] Ibid., p. 75. [174] Ibid., p. 134.
[175] I. R. Coulborn, *Feudalism in History*, Princeton, 1956, p. 145.

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Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq – his original Name and Descent

R. C. Jauhri

Divergent views have been expressed about the antecedents of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq. Ibn Baṭūṭa[1] on the authority of the prelate Ruknu 'd-Dīn of Multān says that the Sulṭān Tughluq was descended from the Turks known as Qaraunas who inhabited the mountainous region between Sindh and Turkestan. He began his career as a menial servant and came to Sindh in the service of a merchant whom he served as a groom *(gulwānīya)*[2] that is to say the keeper of the horses *(rā'il-khail)* – *jilaubān*[3]. This took place in the reign of Sulṭān ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn Khaljī when the Governor of Sindh was his brother Ulugh Khān. Tughluq entered his service, was attached to his person, and enrolled as an ordinary foot soldier. Afterwards his talent came to be recognised and he was promoted to the cavalry and subsequently became one of the junior officers *(umarā' ṣighār)* and Ulugh Khān made him master of horse *(amīru 'l-khail)*. A little later he rose to be one of the great Amīrs *(umarā' kibār)* and was given the title of Maliku'l-Ghāzī. Ibn Baṭūṭa saw an inscription in the sanctum of the principal Mosque[4] of Multān built by Tughluq which ran as follows: "I have fought twenty nine battles with the Tartars and have defeated them. Hence I have been named Maliku'l-Ghāzī". When Quṭbu'd-Dīn ascended the throne he appointed him Governor of Dipalpur and its dependencies. Barani[5] on the other hand refers to Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq as one who was known as Ghāzī Malik during the reign of ʿAlū'u 'd-Dīn Khaljī and had

[1] *The Riḥla.* Translated by Mehdi Hussain, Gackwad's Oriental Series, No. CXX[11], 1953, pp. 47–48. Lee's *Travels of Ibn Baṭūṭah*, London, 1829, p. 125, and C. Defrémery et B. -R. Sanguinetti, *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah*, 4 vols., Paris, 1853–1858, vol. III, pp. 201–202.

[2] *Gallabān* means a 'pastor' or 'shepherd' and *gallabānī* means 'pastoral care', v. *Persian-English Dictionary* by F. Steingass, London, 1930, p. 1096. I do not agree with the view that *gulwānīya* is a corrupt form of the Hindi word *guālā* or *guāliyā* as is believed by Mehdi Hussain, *Riḥla*, p. 47. F. N. 2. The correct word is *gvālā* not *guālā*.

[3] *Jilaubān* means 'a keeper of the horse's bridle' (*jilau* means 'a horses' bridle', *bān* means 'lord', 'chief' or 'keeper'); Steingass, p. 359 and 152 respectively.

[4] Amīr Khusrau also refers to the existence of this Mosque. *Tughluq Nāma*, edited by Sayyid Hāshimī Farīdābādī, Aurangabad, 1933, p. 63.

[5] *Ta'rīkh-i-Firūzshāhī*, edited by Sayyid Khān, Persian Text, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1862, pp. 322–23.

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distinguished himself in Khorasan and Hindustan and was appointed Governor of Dipalpur and Lahore after the Mongol Iqbāl Manda's invasion in 1305. This post he held till the end of Quṭbu 'd-Dīn's reign and proved a barrier to the inroads of the Mongols. He occupied the position formerly held by Shēr Khān. The celebrated poet and historian Amīr Khusrau[6] knew Tughluq personally and gave his antecedents as described by Tughluq himself before the assembly of the nobles after his victory over Nāṣiru 'd-Dīn Khusrau Shāh. "I was", says he, "a wanderer experiencing the ups and downs of fortune. The late king Jalālu 'd-Dīn showed me favour and drew me nearer. After his death I was much filled with anxiety about my future. At last Sulṭān ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn ascended the throne and I sought service under Ulugh Khān the king's brother. After his death I entered the service of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn and have attained the position you see me in". To this the assembly replied "O Amīr, we know you well and are aware of your distinctions. When Sulṭān Jalālu 'd-Dīn besieged Ranthambhor and the besieging army was harassed by the besieged, it was to you that the Sulṭān looked for relief. You were commissioned against the enemy whom you defeated. The Sulṭān honoured you and after his death ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn was equally kind to you and recognising your merits as a warrior deputed you against the Mongols". ʿIṣāmī[7] refers to Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq fighting against Mongol leaders Kubak and Iqbāl Manda along with Malik Kafūr in the reign of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn Khaljī. The historian ʿAfīf[8] is very brief and says that the three brothers Tughluq, Rajab and Abū Bakr came from Khorasan to Delhi in the reign of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn and the Sulṭān conferred upon Tughluq the country of Dipalpur. Yaḥyā ibn Aḥmad[9] mentions Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn the first time in the year 1296–97 A. D. (696. A. H.) as Malik Tughluq fighting against the Mongols along with Ulugh Khān during the reign of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn. Later historians, Niẓāmu 'd-Dīn Aḥmad and ʿAbdu'l-Qādir Badā'ūnī, do not throw

[6] *Tughluq Nāma*, pp. 64–66 and 132–139 verse lines 2600–2681.

که من بودم یکی آواره مردی — زهر و همه چشیده گرم سردی
بلطفم شد جلال الدین مخفور — مقرب کرد نزدیك از خود دور
که نا گه صبح اقبال علائی — جهان را داد فیض دوشنا ئی
الغ خان که برادر بود شه را — ازو افروختم چند کله را
چون او بگذشت گشتم بـاز یك‌چند — بـه پیش شـد علاء الـدین کمـر بنـد

[7] *Futūḥu's-Salāṭīn*, edited by Āghā Mahdī Ḥusain, Agra, 1938, p. 311, verse 5973.

[8] *Ta'rīkh-i-Firūzshāhī*, edited by Maulavī Vilāyat Husain, Persian Text, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1891, p. 36.
Ḥājjī ad-Dabir follows 'Afīf in this matter. Ross E. D., *An Arabic History of Gujrat*, vol. III, London, 1928, p. 893.

[9] *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhi*, edited by M. Hidayat Hosain, Persian Text, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1931, p. 72.
Baranī also makes reference to this invasion of the Mongols in the year 1296–97 A. D. (696 A. H.) and says that Ulugh Khān and Ẓafar Khān were sent with a large force and with amīrs of the late and present reign to oppose them, p. 250.

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light on this matter. Firishta[10], who was anxious to find out the origin and descent of Sulṭān Tughluq, made enquiries from persons interested in the history of the Delhi Sulṭāns at Lahore in the reign of Jahāngīr, and was told by them, "We too have found no express mention about it (origin of Tughluq) in any book, but in this State there is a tradition that Malik Tughluq, the father of King Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq Shāh, was one of the slaves of King Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Balban and, contracted intimacy with the Jats who are considered blockheads in this country married the daughter of one of them and from her was born king Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq Shāh". Firishta has been followed by Sujan Rai[11] who writes that the father of the Sulṭān (Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq Shāh Ghāzī 'l- Mulk) named Tughluq, of Turkish origin, was one of the slaves of Sulṭān Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Balban, and that his mother belonged to the Jat tribe of Punjab.

The above evidence shows that all contemporary writers use 'Tughluq' as the original name of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq, Ibn Baṭuṭa, 'Iṣāmī and 'Afīf have 'Tughluq'. Yaḥyā-ibn Aḥmad has 'Malik Tughluq'. Amīr Khusrau's *Tughluq Nāma* is a work in praise of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq, implying thereby that 'Tughluq' was a proper name and not a tribal cognomen. Baranī, who uses 'Ghāzī Malik' as well as 'Tughluq Shāh' supports other writers in this respect, because 'Ghāzī Malik', as testified by the Multān Mosque inscription, was the title earned by Tughluq on account of his repeated successes against the Mongols, and Baranī mentions Ghāzī Malik for the first time in 1305 A. D. when Ghāzī Malik became Governor of Dipalpur. Even Firishta and Sujan Rai used 'Tughluq' as a proper name for the father of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq, but they do not seem to have been correctly informed. If this were so Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn should not have been called Tughluq Shāh but Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn ibn Tughluq. On his coins Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq describes himself as 'Tughluq'. It is therefore incorrect to hold, as Wolseley Haig[12] has done, that 'Tughluq' was a tribal name. His tribal name was Qarauna[13] – a Turkish tribe of mixed breed. 'Tughluq' was a proper name and was used as such. The coins[14] of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq and Muḥammad ibn

[10] *Ta'rīkh-i-Firishta*. Persian Text, Lucknow. 1864. p. 130.

[11] *Khulāṣatu't-tawārīkh*, Delhi, 1918, p. 235.

[12] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, London, Part III, July 1922, p. 321.

[13] For a scholarly discussion of the term *Qarauna* see Ishwari Prasād's *History of Qaraunah Turks in India*, Allahabad, 1936, pp. 2–6, and Mehdi Hussain's *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, Luzac, 1938, p. 51.

[14] H. Nelson Wright, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, Delhi, 1936, pp. 111, 117. E. Thomas, *The Chronicles of Pathan Kings of Delhi*, London, 1871, p. 250.
Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq's coins have:
Obverse السلطان الغازی غیاث الدنیا و الدین
Reverse تغلق شاه السلطان ناصر المومنین
Muḥammad ibn Tughluq's coins have Kalima
المجاهد فی سبیل الله محمد تغلق شاه

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Tughluq bear witness to this. Firishta's version on the basis of Mulḥaqāt[15] that 'Tughluq' was originally 'Qutlugh' – a Turkish word which Indians in pronouncing it wrongly made 'Tughluq' – is wrong, as is suggested by Ishwari Prasād[16]. Had it been so Muhammad Tugluq on his coins would not have used 'Tughluq' and must have restored the original spelling.

Now the question remains whether Tughluq was born in India or came from outside and if so in whose reign did it happen. Modern writers – Sir Wolseley Haig[17], Ishwari Prasād[18]. Āghā Mahdī Ḥusain[19], – accepting the testimony of Firishta, place the birth of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq from a Jat woman in India, his father having come to India during the reign of Balban and married a Jat woman. The writer of this paper is unable to agree with these learned scholars on this problem. While Firishta and Sujan Rai place the birth of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq in India, his father being a slave of Balban, Ibn Baṭūṭa, Baranī[20] and ʿAfīf regard him as an outsider. Firishta and Sujan Rai being later writers separated from the period of Tughluq by three and four centuries respectively, cannot be relied upon in such a matter as the antecedents of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn Tughluq. Their versions are based on tradition prevalent in the Panjab during their day. The tradition seems to be apocryphal. Had it been authentic it would not have escaped the notice of contemporary writers, particularly Yaḥyā ibn Aḥmad who belonged to Sarhind in the Panjab and had no reason to suppress this fact as he wrote his history after the fall of the Tughluqs. Had Tughluq been born in India and had his father been a slave of Balban then Thugluq would not have regarded himself as a wanderer as related in the *Tughluq Nāma*, but ordinarily must have been employed

[15] Probably the *Mulḥaqāt* of ʿAinu 'd-Dīn Bījāpūrī which Firishta cites as one of his authorities.

[16] *History of Qaraunah Turks in India*, p. 5.

[17] J. R. A. S., July 1922, p. 321:
"I believe that Ghiyas-al-din's father came of the tribe of Turks now dwelling near Khotan. Tughluq Khan who served Balban may have entered his service in the usual manner as an article of merchandise or may have been expelled from Black Cathay by Mughal raids and found an asylum in India".

[18] *History of Qaraunah Turks in India*, p. 7:
"In a matter like this Ferishta is preferable to Afif and Ibn Batutah, it is possible that his father may have come in the time of Balban and married a Jat woman of the Panjab. Born of an Indian mother Ghazi Malik typified in his character the salient features of the two races – Hindu and Turk".

[19] *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, pp. 17–18:
"The information given by Farishta who traces the rise of Tughluq from the time of Sultan Ghiyas Uddin Balban seems to be nearer the truth. Farishta has been in the main followed by the Hindu historian of the 17th century, Sujan Rai, the author of *Khulāṣatu't-tawārīkh*. Farishta's version may therefore be regarded as approximately true".

[20] This is clear from Baranī's statement that Ghazī Malik had distinguished himself in India and Khorasan before his appointment as Governor of Dipalpur by 'Alā'u'd-Dīn Khaljī in 1305 A. D.

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in the service of the State. Thus *Tughluq Nāma* indirectly supports the view that Tughluq came to India from outside. Moreover Tughluq was the name of Ghiyāthu 'd-Dīn and not of his father, as is wrongly recorded by Firishta and Sujan Rai. The testimony of Ibn Baṭūṭa and ʿAfīf cannot be accepted as these writers place the arrival of Tughluq in the times of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn Khaljī while we find Tughluq being patronised by Jalālu 'd-Dīn Khalji (as recorded by Amīr Khusrau who personally knew the Sulṭān). The logical view therefore would be that Tughluq came to India from Khorasan some time after the days of Balban. This is corroborated by the so-called Memoirs[21] of Muḥammad ibn Tughluq wherein he says that his father "had come as a stranger to this country sometime after the days of Balban's tyrannous rule"[22]. Jalālu 'd-Dīn Khaljī employed him in the State service for the first time and in his reign Tughluq played some part in the siege of Ranthambhor in 1298 A. D. After the death of Jalālu 'd-Dīn he entered the service of Ulugh Khān when the latter was sent to Multān by ʿAlā'u'd-Dīn Khaljī against Arkali Khān and Ruknu 'd-Dīn Ibrahīm, sons of the late Sulṭān. Under Ulugh Khān he fought against the Mongols. After the death of Ulugh Khān some time in 1301 A. D. he joined the service of ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn who later on appointed him Governor of Dipalpur in 1305 A. D. to defend the North-Western Frontier against the Mongol raids. It was as the Governor of Dipalpur – a key post held by him up to his accession – that Tughluq, who had become Ghāzī Malik by then, gained prominence in the military hierarchy and his son Fakhru 'd-Dīn Jauna (the future Muḥammad ibn Tughluq) was appointed Dādbēg by ʿAlā'u 'd-Dīn Khaljī[23].

[21] This is a fragment of four pages included in the Manuscript of the *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī* in the British Museum (B. M. Add. 25785).

[22] Facsimile of the Memoirs of Muḥammad ibn Tughluq in the *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq* by Mehdi Hussain, last page.

[23] *Baranī, p. 240.* Dādbēg was an officer of the court and royal household.

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The Historical Significance of the Turkish Conquest of Northern India

KLARA Z. ASHRAFYAN

The first great state in the medieval history of India, the Delhi Sultanate, arose in the early XIII century with a ruling class composed of Muslim feudal lords. They came as conquerors, from Central Asia, from Ghūr (Western Afghanistan) and Khorasan, and for the most part were Turks, but included also Afghans, Tajiks and Iranians.

The formation of the Delhi Sultanate was directly connected with events that had taken place at this time and in the preceding period in a number of countries in the Middle East, and above all with the acute political struggle between various feudal groupings. The decisive factor in this struggle was the Turkish military feudal nobility which relied on bands of warlike fellow-tribesmen or detachments of slave guards, and which by the IX–X century had already firmly established its influence in a number of states in Central Asia, Iran and Afghanistan.

This struggle intensified throughout the X–XIII centuries due to the continuous migrations and influx into these countries of Turkish and Mongol nomads who had passed through the process of the disintegration of the tribal system; and as a result many of the feudal nobility and clan or tribal chiefs who were in the process of becoming feudal, were incited to fresh conquests.

At the beginning of the XI century Northern India, split into a multitude of small, mutually hostile states and feudal dominions ruled by Rajput dynasties, had already become an object of frequent raids by the amīr of Ghaznī, Maḥmūd (998–1030), who plundered districts and cities in Sindh, Kashmir, Rajasthan and Gujerat. But his power in India was only a reality in Lahore, which under his successors became the capital of the Ghaznavid state. In the seventies of the XII century, at the time of the struggle between the Ghaznavids and the Seljuks, the rulers of the small kingdom of Ghūr, at one time conquered by Maḥmūd, grew considerably stronger. Under Ghiyās-ud-dīn Muḥammad Ghūrī, the ruler of Ghūr, the capture of Lahore in 1186 put an end to the rule of the Ghaznavids in India.

By the beginning of the XIII century, Northern India, including Bengal, was in the hands of the warlords of Muʿizz-ud-dīn Muḥammad Ghūrī, the ruler of Ghūr. After his death, the greater part of the Indian possessions of the Sultans of Ghūr were incorporated in the state founded by one of these generals, Quṭb-ud-dīn Aibak (1206), who became the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate.

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The conquest of India and the establishment of the power of foreign feudal rulers had a number of important consequences, the historical significance of which can hardly be exaggerated.

As is well known, the connections between India and the countries of the Near and Middle East have a history of many centuries. These connections had been established long before the coming of the Turkish conquerors, feudal lords and adventurers. Geographers, travellers and historians from various countries of the Arab East took a lively interest in the culture, customs and peoples of India. Arab culture and science[1] were assimilated and further developed certain aspects and achievements in Indian mathematics, medicine and astronomy.

Islam, or rather its various doctrines, penetrated to India along with the Muslim theologians, mendicant ṣūfī dervishes, and preachers of Muslim sectarian teachings who visited the country. In some Indian ports and cities which played an important part in international trade, there grew up colonies of Muslim merchants.

Nevertheless it was only after the establishment of the power of the Sultans of Delhi and the other Muslim rulers who succeeded them, that any strong influence of the culture and religion of the peoples of the "Muslim East" became apparent in India.

In the wake of the conquerors, thousands of merchants, *ʿulamās*, *saiyids*, *ṣūfīs* and "penmen" – the hereditary officials, poets and historiographers, flooded into the country, bringing their families and household servants. The conquerors themselves in fact not infrequently came and settled in whole tribes. The close contact and interaction of Indian culture with the culture brought into the country from the countries of the "Muslim East" led to their synthesis and to the creation of what is called Indo-Muslim culture.

In the Delhi Sultanate and later in a number of other Muslim states in Northern and South India, Persian became the official language, the language of the court. A rich literature was also created in that language – histories (many of which are monuments of literary prose), scientific and legal treatises and poetic compositions which belong to the treasures of world classics. Persian had an enormous influence on the development of Hindustani, and the rich traditions of Persian-Tajik literature, above all its poetry, influenced the development of Urdu prose and poetry.

The fact that Persian was for centuries the basic administrative language in the offices of the revenue department to a considerable extent determined the agrarian-revenue terminology which prevailed in India in the middle ages and the modern period. A great number of the terms most in use to denote various forms of feudal ownership, communal landholding, class privileges, feudal obligations, tax collecting and so on, are of pure Persian or Arabo-Persian derivation (there being many Arabic elements in Persian itself). It is enough to mention such familiar

[1] Arab culture and science is an accepted term for the highly developed culture and science created by the peoples of a number of countries within the Omayyad Abbasid khalifats.

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terms as *zamīndār*, *jāgīr* and *jāgīrdār*, *mīrāṭi* and *mīraṭdār*, *waṭan*, *inʿām*, *muʿāf*, *jamaʿ* etc.

Traditions of architecture which had formed in Central Asia, Iran and some countries of the Near East, enriched by features taken from Indian architectural styles, were further developed in mediaeval India. Numerous monuments, such as mosques, mausoleums and palaces, genuine masterpieces of art, witness to the flourishing of Indo-Muslim architecture in the XIII–XVIII century.

The creation of a synthesized culture was only one of the consequences of the conquest of India. This most important event had a many-sided effect on the most diverse aspects of the economic, social and political life of the country.

The present sketch cannot in any way claim to investigate all aspects of this vast problem; it merely aims to set forth some very modest conclusions relating to concrete problems, which the present writer derived in the course of work on the source materials (mainly in Persian) for the history of India in the XIII–XVIII centuries.

It should be added that the writer dealt with these questions in a report read at a meeting of the scientific staff of the Indian Section of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, in the discussion of which the late professor K. M. Ashraf took part during his visit to the Soviet Union.

The Delhi Sultanate was a relatively centralized feudal state. It had arisen in the process of conquest in the first place as an instrument to secure the interests of the feudal chiefs as conquerors in a conquered land. They were confronted not only with wide strata of the population, the peasants and common craftsmen-traders, but also with the local feudal lords and semi-feudalized heads of the village commune whom the conquerors had completely or almost completely deprived of their lands and privileges.

The wars of plunder and conquest, which brought new territorial acquisitions and rich booty, could not be undertaken by individual feudal lords at their own cost and risk. The conduct of such wars presupposed a certain consolidation of the foreign feudal lords and their support by the central authority. Opposition to the foreigners on the part of the population and the local feudal lords inevitably created a desire in them to consolidate. External political conditions also in no small degree helped to strengthen the authority of the Sultans. This was associated above all with the threat of the conquest of Northern India by the Mongols, who in the course of time had firmly established their domination in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Iran, and who had more than once carried out destructive raids into India beginning from the twenties of the XIII century.

Thus the creation of the relatively well organized state of the Delhi Sultans in place of a multitude of small, warring kingdoms, was the direct result of the Turkish conquest. In various regions which had formerly been independent kingdoms and feudal domains, the Sultans' governors were appointed with military and administrative powers.

The Turkish conquests naturally led to the redistribution of land property. Part of the Hindu feudal lords were deprived of their domains which passed to the

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conquerors. But the foreigners' consolidation of power was not carried out by the mechanical replacement of the old landowners by the new. It introduced a number of essential alterations in the form of feudal tenure, the economic basis of the feudal state. These improvements, connected above all with the creation of a relatively centralized feudal state, consisted in a considerable strengthening of one of the forms of feudal ownership, that is, state ownership *(diwānī, khāliṣa)* which became the predominating one in the Delhi Sultanate. State lands were granted as military fiefs (*iqṭāʿ*, later *jāgīr* and *tuyūl)* to feudal vassals. In a number of small Rajput kingdoms in Northern India before its conquest by the Turks, the ruling prince (he was in fact the head of a clan) was in effect the supreme owner of the land. The process of the break-up of the Rajput clan or kinship and the crisis of tribal patrimonial estates *(grás)* stimulated the development of conditional feudal tenure.

Although the sources (mostly epigraphical) establish the existence of service tenure in the Rajput kingdoms before the Turkish conquest, they existed only on a limited scale as yet. The patrimonial tenure or survival forms of tribal ownership by Rajput clans still predominated, however impaired by the process of the break-up of the tribe. As far as we have been able to observe in investigating the source materials, the Rajput princes granted service fiefs *(paṭṭa)* not to members of their own kin, but to members of other Rajput clans and tribes[2]. The granting of lands as hereditary estates was not the outcome of a well developed conditional feudal system, but was associated with the persistence of traditions of tribal ownership.

Only much later, after several centuries, the distinction between the *paṭṭa* and the *grás* was obliterated when these categories of tenure, where they had survived, were changed into feudalities. In the first third of the XIX century, Tod, the British political agent in Rajasthan, on the basis if his observations and using the terminology found in certain documents, speaks of the Rajputs of Mewara, holders of *grás* estates, as persons who receive land grants *(paṭṭa)* from the prince "for the service which they render". At this time the right to hold in *grás* was revived, and a person who inherited a *grás* paid a fixed amount[3].

In the early period of Turkish rule many patrimonial lands had already been converted into the *iqṭāʿ* of the immigrating nobility and their mercenary contingents as the result of direct seizure and the expulsion or physical extermination of the former owners. The rest of the patrimonial estates remained in the possession of Rajput *girāsya*, many of whom kept their lands down to the establishment of British rule. In the Muslim states of India in the XV–XVIII centuries which arose from the ruins of the Delhi Sultanate, the rulers did not resort to the actual seizure of estates but rather endeavoured to circumscribe the influence of Rajput

[2] A. K. Forbes, *Ras Mala. Hindoo annals of the province of Goozerat in Western India*, vol. I, London, 1856, p. 294, p. 324.

[3] J. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, vol. I, London, 1829, pp. 190–191; A. K. Forbes, op. cit., vol. II, p. 300.

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rulers and to subordinate them to their authority. This policy was dictated on the one hand by a certain strengthening of many Rajput feudal lords in the period of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate (from the end of the XIV to the beginning of the XV century,) and on the other, by the gradual assimilation of the conquerors. In the hands of the Muslim rulers, Islam changed from being the standard of a "holy" war of conquest and the religion of a foreign feudal upper class and served more and more as an instrument for strengthening the central authority. Thus, for example, in Gujerat under the government of the Muslim dynasty of Tank or Aḥmad-Shāhī (end of the XIV to the last third of the XVI century) the Rajput princes retained part of their patrimonial lands on condition of military service. The *Dīwān* of Gujerat, the head of the fiscal administration ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān, author of the well-known three volume history of Gujerat (written in the middle of the XVIII century) writes that the Rajputs and Kolis (one of the independent tribes of Gujerat) opposed the Sultan for a long time but finally were obliged to make submission, agree to take service and to pay taxes *(nūkarī wa māl-guzarī)*. A quarter of the patrimonial estates (*waṭan*, literally "homeland", "patrimony") was left to them in fief and became known in Gujerati as *wantkha* (a corrupt form from *waṭan*), while three quarters of the estates *(talpad)* passed into the possession of the treasury[4].

The *wantkha* of the descendents of Rajput clans, formerly the patrimonial estate, regarded by the Muslim rulers as military fiefs, as well as the *paṭṭa*, is often simply called *jāgīr* in our sources. However the distinguishing feature of the *wantkha* was the hereditary character of the institution; not only *de facto* (as was the case of some *jāgīrs*) but also *de jure*.

The epigraphical and chronicle materials show that in the period of Muslim rule in Gujerat, Rajasthan, and the central part of Northern India, throughout the XIII–XVIII centuries the survival forms of Rajput tribal property, where it still remained, were still going through the process of transformation into feudal service tenures. This process conditioned by the break-up of the tribe, went on irrespective of the policy of the Muslim rulers. It took place also in kingdoms that retained their independence. But there is no doubt that the conquest of India by foreign feudal rulers, and the policy which they followed of strengthening the state and state property, struck forcibly at the survival forms of tribal landholding and made possible the further development of the feudal system in the country.

Notwithstanding the statements of some scholars who have put forward the theory that feudalism was introduced into India by the Muslim conquerors, the conquest of India by the Turks and their successors from Central Asia and Afghanistan was not accompanied by the creation of a new social system in the country.

Within the framework of the states created by them, many institutions, both feudal and semi-feudal, which had been prevalent before the XVIII century in

[4] ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Bahādur. *Mirāt-i-Aḥmadī*, ed. Nawab Ali, vol. I, Baroda, 1927, p. 173 (Persian text).

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India, were further developed and their growth markedly hastened by the policy of the rulers of the Muslim states.

The establishment of the power of the Turkish feudal lords in India did not at first directly disturb the life of the remote village communes. Neither the state nor the feudal *muqṭaʿ* (the holders of *iqṭāʿ*) interfered in the internal affairs of the commune, namely the distribution of the land among the peasants and the apportioning of their contributions to taxation.

However, feudal rent, which in the conditions of the predominant feudal state-ownership took the form of a rent-tax, was always a major factor affecting the village.

A study of the feudal chronicles shows that the amount and form of rent-tax in the Muslim states of India were not precisely fixed but were determined in each particular period by the various economic and political interests of the feudal state.

Although originally the collection of taxes was not systematized and the basic revenue of the Delhi Sultans was tribute from Indian princes and other feudal lords, at the very beginning of the XIV century great changes were already introduced in the revenue system. The earliest information about the form and amount of taxes and the methods of collecting in the Delhi Sultanate actually dates from this period. According to the evidence of the historian Baranī (d. 1356) a reform of Sultan ʿAlā-ud-dīn Khaljī (1295–1315) instituted a land tax amounting to half the crop; the unit of assessment was taken as a *biswa* (one-twentieth of a *bīgha*). "All cultivation, whether on small or large scale, was to be carried on by measurement at a certain rate for every *biswa*. Half (of the produce) was to be paid without any diminution and this rule was to apply to *khudās* and *balāhars*, without the slightest distinction"[5].

Prior to the establishment of power by the conquerors in Northern India the amount of rent-tax had never exceeded an amount varying from a sixth to a quarter of the crop. The exploitation of the peasant was less intensive than later. There is a story told by one of the Indian chroniclers about the son of the ruler of Mālwa, Jag Dar, of the Paramāra clan of Rajputs, which might be aptly recalled. It is clear from this story that the income of a person living on the feudal rent of a village barely covered his most modest expenses[6]. Perhaps this (and partly also the difficulty of making these privileges when bestowed effective, owing to the opposition of free commune peasants, frequent bad harvests etc.) explains why the feudal lords in the Rajput kingdoms preferred money payments from the treasury to grants of land[7].

[5] *Khudā* or *chaudhri* is a member of the upper class in the commune, an elder of the village or district; *balāhar* – an indigent peasant, possibly an untouchable. Ẓiyā-ud-dīn Baranī, *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz-shāhī*, ed. by Sayid Ahmad Khan, Calcutta, 1862, pp. 287–288.

[6] A. K. Forbes, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 118–119.

[7] Ibid., p. 143.

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The reform of ʿAlā-ud-dīn Khaljī not only raised the amount of the land tax but also brought under assessment categories of villagers hitherto immune from taxation, that is the village and district elders and other members of the commune upper ranks. This reform, considerably increasing the feudal rent, covered a number of regions in the central parts of Northern India. The upper ranks of the commune who were becoming feudalized and now appeared as intermediaries between the state and the *muqṭaʿ* on the one hand, and the peasants on the other, continued as before to tax the peasants in their own interest, receiving the so-called *khuta* share from them *(qismat-i khudā)*. The Delhi Sultans regarded them as a permanent obstacle to their undivided domination over the peasantry.

The revenue reform of ʿAlā-ud-dīn Khaljī, according to the historian, led to the position when "the *khudās* were also to be deprived of all their peculiar privileges"[8]. Under ʿAlā-ud-dīn's successors, the commune upper ranks in process of feudalization got back part of their privileges. In particular Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq (1320–1325) reestablished the immunity of the *khudā* from taxation ("taxes are not taken from the crops and pastures of the *khudā* and *muqaddams*"). However, the privileges of the *khudā* were at the same time limited by the Sultan, since the state officials were held responsible to watch strictly that "the *khudā* and *muqaddams* should not tax the peasants on their own account in excess of the Sultan's *kharāj*"[9]. The village upper ranks nevertheless continued the practice of taxing the peasants on their own account in spite of the sovereign's orders. The chroniclers in particular bear witness to the mild policy of Fīrūz Shāh (1351–1388) with regard to the *khudā* and others, who, according to Baranī, became very rich during the reign of this Sultan[10]. That the *khudā* was drawn in for the collection of state taxes arose from the tacit recognition of their real authority in the Indian village, and this at the same time helped to strengthen their power still further. The *khudā* and others possessing considerable authority sanctified, moreover, by the old traditions of past centuries, in spite of the Sultan's reforms and instructions, were unquestionally the exploiters of the peasantry.

In those regions of India which were included in the Sultanate as vassal territories, tribute paid by their rulers to the conquerors inevitably placed a heavy burden on broad strata of the population.

Under ʿAlā-ud-dīn's successors the amount of the land tax was officially less. But it was considerably raised by a large number of so-called "illegal" dues or *abwāb*. The *abwābs* were legalized by Muḥammad Shāh Tughluq (1325 — 1351) and, in the opinion of the historian, were the cause of the country's ruin. "The lands were ruined, and cultivation was entirely arrested. When the *vaʿiyats* in distant countries heard of the distress and ruin of the *vaʿiyats* in the Doab, through fear of the same evil befalling them, they threw off their allegiance and betook themselves to the jungles. The decline of cultivation, and the distress of the *vaʿiyats* in the

[8] Ẓiyā-ud-dīn Baranī, op. cit., p. 287.
[9] Ibid., p. 430.
[10] Ibid., p. 554.

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Doab, and the failure of convoys of corn from Hindustan, produced a fatal famine in Delhi and its environs and throughout the Doab. Grain became dear. There was a deficiency of rain, so the famine became general. It continued for some years, and thousands and thousands of people perished of want. Communities were reduced to distress, and families were broken up".[11]

The intensification of the tax burden usually brought about a decline in the productivity of peasant husbandry or a stoppage of production and was the cause of many spontaneous revolts. These circumstances forced the Sultans to take measures in the interests of the feudal state in order to encourage the development of village economy, in the first place by introducing changes in revenue policy. The growth of productivity of peasant economy stimulated fresh feudal plunder. Periods of intensifying exploitation alternated with periods of its relative decrease[12]. The temporary reduction of exploitation created conditions for the development of productive forces and the progress of feudal economy. But there is no doubt that throughout the period from the XIII to the XVIII century in proportion as the feudal system became stronger and the personal power of feudal lords increased, the norm of exploitation rose. If in the XIV century the maximal land tax was assessed at half the crop, by the end of the XVII century the tax took a much greater share of the harvest. An edict of the Mughal Pādshāh Aurangzēb (1658–1707) circulated to the regional offices of the revenue department with the aim of preventing the ruin of the peasantry, ordered the officials to be strict in seeing that the *kharāj* did not exceed half the crop; wherever the *kharāj* exceeded this amount, it should be reduced to half the crop[13]. Other edicts of Aurangzēb proclaimed the abolition of a large number (up to 80) of *abwāb* collected from the agricultural population and craftsmen traders. However, these attempts on the part of the ruler to limit the rapacity of the feudal lords in their plunder of peasant economy on which the welfare of the feudal state depended, were doomed to failure. In spite of the strict orders of the Pādshāh, all the *abwāb* (except one, the *pandari*) continued to be exacted, so that according to the historian Khāfi-Khān (his work "*Muntakhab-al-Lubāb*" was completed in the middle of the XVIII century) "throughout the whole kingdom of Hindustan in the days of the reign of ʿAlamgīr (Aurangzēb) there was no fear of punishment in the hearts of the *jāgīrdārs*, *faujdārs* and *zamīndārs*"[14].

Thus, on the one hand, a considerable increase in feudal exploitation was the direct result of the establishment of foreign rule in India, inasmuch as the conquerors did not do away with the exploitation of the population by their vassal princes (in vassal territories) and by the intermediaries (the feudalized commune

[11] Ibid., p. 473.

[12] Shams Sirāj ʿAfīf, *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz-shāhī*, ed. V. Husain, Calcutta, 1891, pp. 98–99 (Persian text); Ẓiyā-ud-dīn Baranī, op. cit., p. 574; *Futūḥat-i Fīrūz-shāhī*, microfilm of the manuscript belonging to the British Museum.

[13] ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Bahādur, op. cit., vol. I, p. 270.

[14] Muḥammad Hāshim Khān (Khāfī Khān), *Muntakhab-al-Lubāb*, ed. K. D. Ahmad and Haig, vol. 2, Calcutta, 1874, pp. 88–89.

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upper ranks) in many *iqṭāʿ* and fiefs. The exaction of tribute from feudal princes and rent-tax from the districts administered by the Sultan's governors, led in these circumstances to a considerable intensification of tax oppression.

Moreover, the intensification of feudal exploitation which proceeded throughout the period of the XIII to the XVIII century, kept pace with the development of the feudal system and individual feudal tenure, which, as has already been indicated, was also to some extent hastened by the Turkish conquest. The intensification of feudal exploitation in turn influenced the processes which were taking place within the village commune, hastening in some measure the process of the differentiation of wealth.

With the establishment of the power of the Turkish feudal rulers in India, Islam became the official religion. The conquerors, originally representing a closed corporation alien to the local population, and the small Muslim population enjoyed considerable privileges in the early period of the Delhi Sultanate. These privileges in certain cases existed independently of the social status of the Muslims.

The treatise *Dastūr al-albāb fī ʿilm al-ḥisāb* ('Instructions for accounting') written by a revenue official, a contemporary of the Sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq, Ḥājī ʿAbd-ul-Ḥamīd Muḥarrir Ghaznavī, expounds a number of *sharīʿat* rules. He mentions, in particular, the "land *ʿushr*" and "the *kharāj* on crops and fruit trees" prescribed in the *sharīʿat*. *ʿUshr* and *kharāj* are regarded as derived from different categories of land tenures. Lands seized by muslim rulers and distributed among their soldiers, followers of Islam, were generally called *ʿushrī* lands. The *ʿushra* was equivalent to 1/10 or 1/20 of the crop according to the system of irrigation. The *kharāj* levied on non-Muslim estates within the territories of Muslim rulers was not precisely fixed; it could be 1/5, 1/4 or 1/3 of the crop, but not more than one half[15].

Thus, the *mālik* cultivators in the region of Lahore, who were Muslims, were freed from land tax *(kharāj)*, assessed at 1/5 of the crop, by an edict of the first Sultan of Delhi, Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak "And as the *sharīʿat* commands (Quṭb-ud-dīn) laid down where there should be an *ʿushr* (a tenth part) and where half an *ʿushr* (one twentieth)"[16].

Islam, which for the newly-arrived rulers of India was an instrument for their consolidation in the conquered country, for the subjugation of independent tribes and peoples and the suppression of local feudality, was forcibly imposed by the conquerors. At the price of adopting Islam many of the local feudal nobility preserved their lives and lands by becoming the vassals and tributaries of the conquerors. In the initial stages the mere fact of belonging to Islam opened the way to honourable rank and profitable office in army and administration.

[15] Ḥājī ʿAbd-ul-Ḥamīd Muḥarrir Ghaznavī, *Dastūr al-albāb fī ʿilm al-ḥisāb*, *Mediaeval India quarterly*, Aligarh, 1951, vol. 1, N. 3–4, p. 61.

[16] *Tārīkh-i Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak-shāh*, ed. by E. Denison Ross, London, 1927, pp. 33–34.

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Release from the oppressive levy of the *jizya* paid by the members of other religions to the Muslim rulers, was a powerful incentive to accept Islam. Gradually Islam penetrated to wider and wider strata of the population. Merchants, craftsmen and also peasants were converted.

Yaḥyā ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh Sirhindī, the historian of the XV century, describing Timur's invasion of India (1398/99) remarks: "The Muslims of towns and cities, and villagers *(mardum rusta)*, both Muslim and Hindu, fled in terror before him"[17].

As Islam penetrated deeper among wider sections of the population, the mere confession of the faith irrespective of the social status of Muslims ceased to be grounds for many privileges which had been enjoyed in the first stages of the Turkish conquest. The revenue reforms of many of the Muslim rulers, including Aurangzeb who carried out a policy of extreme religious intolerance, did not provide for any special privileges for Muslims in the matter of paying the land tax so essential to the feudal state[18].

At the same time, the conquerors of India and their descendants, having lost contact with their abandoned homeland, contracted marriages with Hindus and gradually became assimilated in the conquered country, adopting much of Indian culture, language and customs. Ibn Baṭūṭa, the famous Arab traveller who visited India in the thirties and forties of the XIV century already speaks of purely Hindu ceremonies performed by Indian Muslims. Thus, for example, at the wedding of one of the Amirs of Sultan Muḥammad Shāh Tughluq, the bridegroom painted his hands and feet red and the women danced before him. This custom exists in India to-day and is known as *mayan*. Hindu customs, in particular the so-called *phūl* (Hindi: "flower"), were also observed at Muslim funerals[19].

Even a custom which would seem to be so completely alien to them as *satī* (widow burning) penetrated among Muslim circles[20].

The assimilation of the conquerors in India, the extension of the political foundations of their rule as a result of their rapprochement and alliance with local Indian feudal lords, many of whom became converts, transformed Islam, once the symbol of war and conquest, into a tool for the domination of the feudal ruling class, which was not ethnically homogeneous but made up of the descendants of Turks, Afghans and other foreign feudal nobility, along with the local feudal lords of India, as well as offshoots from among other strata of the indigenous Indian population.

[17] Yaḥyā bin Aḥmad bin ʿAbdullāh as-Sirhindī, *Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī*, Calcutta, 1931, p. 163.

[18] ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Bahādur, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 268–272.

[19] Ibn-Batoutah, *Voyages* . . . Texte arabe, accompagné d'une traduction, t. 3. Paris, 1855, pp. 273, 387–388; A. M. Husain, *Le gouvernement du Sultanate de Delhi*, Paris, 1936, p. 57.

[20] Sikandar bin Muḥammad, *Mirāt-i Sikandarī*, transl. into English by E. C. Bayley in *The local Muhammadan dynasties of Gujarat*, London, 1886, p. 235.

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As we know, in a number of countries of the Near and Middle East Islam was established as a result of Arab conquest. Despite the fact that Islam was the official religion in many, and, moreover, in the most important states in India in the XIII–XVIII centuries, it nevertheless did not, in its orthodox form, become the religion of the majority. This is to some extent to be explained by the fact that since the time of the Arab conquests from the XII to the XIII century, Islam had passed through an important process of evolution. From a religion of a class society in transition, conserving many patriarchal democratic traditions of the communal-tribal system of society, preaching equality and brotherhood and repudiating usury, Islam became the official religion of the feudal state created by the Arabs in the countries conquered by them. From a religion of protest and innovation, it became the sanction and mainstay of domination by the feudal upper ranks. The watchword of the brotherhood and equality of all members of the community very soon gave way to intolerance towards the adherents of other religions and the preaching of domination over other peoples by Muslim feudal lords.

The transformation of Islam into a religion that sanctified the stability of the feudal state led to the birth of Muslim sectarianism. Many of the sectarian doctrines were the ideological form taken by anti-feudal popular movements among peasants, handicraftsmen, and small traders.

It is therefore not surprising that in the XIII century, in spite of the establishment of Muslim power in India and the imposing of Islam by fire and sword, this faith had numerous adherents not due merely to the policy of the *sulṭāns* and *pādshāhs*, and not only in its orthodox form. Moreover, Islam penetrated to India mainly thanks to the activities there of the *ṣūfīs* and various Muslim sectarians, and hence predominantly in the form of Muslim mysticism and religious dissent.

The propagation of Muslim mysticism in India in the form of Sufism and sectarian doctrines which seized hold of earlier patriarchal-democratic principles forgotten in feudalized Islam, began long before the foreign feudal rulers established their power.

The first preachers *(dāʿī)* of Ismailism appeared in India, in Sindh, apparently soon after the conquest of that country by the Arabs in the VIII century. In any case there is evidence of the persecution of Shiites and Karmatians in Sindh by the governors of the Baghdad Caliph.

Sheikhs and dervishes of many *ṣūfī* orders – the Suhravardīs, Haidarī, Niẓāmī, and Qādirī – were active in India in the XI – XIII centuries. The sheikhs of the Chishtī order enjoyed great popularity. Sufism in India as in other lands, found its supporters among various strata of the population. The rôle of the *ṣūfī* orders, and even of the same order at different periods, varied. Many of them reflected the interests of one or the other grouping of feudal lords. The sheikhs of the orders took an active part in the struggle for power among warring feudal cliques.

Their connections with the feudal lords were the source of the wealth of the *ṣūfī khāngāhs* (monasteries) and sheikhs.

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But the success of sufism among the common people was determined by certain ideals which they preached of humanity, renunciation of riches, the equality of man (expressed in the doctrine that all men have the possibility to attain communion with God through self-denial and good deeds).

Sharaf-ud-dīn Yaḥyā Manerī (XIV century), prominent *ṣūfī* in India, in one of his religious-ethical and didactic works puts into the mouth of a "saint" a saying about the duty of rulers: "It is good to feed one's people, to clothe the naked, to console the broken of heart and to help the needy."[21]

The pessimistic *ṣūfī* teaching of self-denial and retirement from wordly affairs, close in spirit to the ancient religious and ethical ideas of the Hindus, found a ready response among the destitute of the towns and villages suffering from the savage oppression of the feudal lords. The teaching of brotherhood was in striking contrast to the harsh laws of caste held sacred by orthodox Hinduism.

For this reason it was the *ṣūfī* sheikhs and dervishes who converted a large number of the untouchable castes and tribes to Islam.

The head of the *ṣūfī* Chishtī order (1175–1266), the poet Farīd Ganjishakar, converted thousands of Hindus from among untouchables[22]. A tradition of some of the peoples of the Punjab – Sial, Khokhar, Dhudi, Tob etc. – is evidence that they were converted to Islam by this famous sheikh[23].

In the twenties of the XIII century one of the Turkish commanders, Nāṣir-ud-dīn Qubacha, ruler of Multan, wished to take revenge on the *ṣūfī* Sheikh Bahā'ud-dīn Zakariyā Multānī who had been in correspondence with Iltutmish, the Sultan of Delhi and the enemy of Qubacha. But the Sheikh managed to escape thanks to the influence which he had among many tribes in Sindh and Multan[24].

Before the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate, in the second half of the XII century, Sheikh Mu'īn-ud-dīn of the Chishtī *ṣūfī* order of dervishes settled in Ajmer, the capital of the Rajput raja Prithviraj. The raja and his courtiers were displeased with him, but they did not venture to interfere because the Sheikh had great influence among the people[25].

Among the other Muslim sectarian doctrines, Mahdism won many converts in India. The Mahdis made their appearance in the Delhi Sultanate in the second half of the XIV century[26], in the Sultanate of Gujerat and in the kingdom of Islām Shāh Sur in the middle of the XVI century[27] and in Gujerat at the time of the

[21] M. Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau of Delhi*, Bombay, 1927, p. 36.

[22] M. Singh Dewana, *A history of Panjabi literature (1100–1932)*, Amritsar, 1956, p. 21.

[23] K. A. Nizami, *The life and times of Shaikh Farid ud-din Ganj-i Shakar*, Aligarh, 1955, pp. 107–108.

[24] K. A. Nizami, *Early Indo-Muslim mystics and their attitude towards the state*, Islamic Culture, Hyderabad, 1949, N. 4, p. 313.

[25] Ibid.

[26] *Futūḥat-i Fīrūz-shāhī*. Microfilm of a manuscript belonging to the British Museum.

[27] 'Abd-al Qādir bin-i-Maluk Shāh al-Badaonī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1868, pp. 395–402.

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Mughal kings[28]. A large part of the population in a number of places in India, including Palanpur (Gujerat), are Mahdis to the present day.

Sufism and the Muslim sects, penetrating deep into the masses of the people, had a powerful effect on the social thought of mediaeval India. Under the influence of sufism[29] and other sectarian doctrines, certain so-called reform teachings collectively known as *bhakti* formed.

As an example may be noted the ideas of the Imām-Shāhī or Satpanth (the True Way) sect which was active in Gujerat in the first quarter of the XVI century, one of the most developed regions of India from the social-economic point of view.

The Satpanth sect possesses an extensive literature of hymns for religious festivals *(garb)* and short religious-mythological poems *(gnan)*.

Specimens were published in English translation from Gujerati, Kachchhi, Sindhi, Multani and Persian by the Ismaili Society in 1948[30]. The majority of *garb* and *gnan*, including those ascribed to Pīr Shams (XIII century), were composed at a later date, namely in the XVI–XVIII centuries, after the sect had been given an organized form (in the first quarter of the XVI century).

Certain views found in the Satpanths' writings indicate the democratic character of the sect's ideology.

The Satpanths sought virtue, mercy, and love of one's neighbour. *Janatpuri*, a work ascribed to Imām-Shāh (XV century), who gave his name to a sect in the first quarter of the XVI century, contains the following story. Imām-Shāh on his way to heaven was surprised to see a group of people some of whom were burning with fire and others naked and starving. When Imām-Shāhs asked what sin it was that had brought them to such a wretched condition, he was told that these were people who had never given alms; those who had not given clothes to the poor were themselves now naked and without food[31]. The teaching of charity allies the Satpanths with the *ṣūfīs*[32].

The Satpanths attacked riches, luxury and covetousness. No one will take his palaces, treasures, houses or horses with him into the world to come; his wealth will remain on earth, it is said in one of the *gnan* ascribed to Pīr Ṣadr-ud-dīn[33]. "Never wear a dress made of cloth coloured with indigo" (i. e. made of expensive material) was an other commandment of this *pīr*[34].

[28] ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Bahādur, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 220–221.

[29] The well-known historian, the late Prof. I. M. Reisner has written on the influence of Islam, in particular of Sufism on Sikhism: I. M. Reisner, *Popular movements in India in XVII–XVIII centuries*, Moscow, 1961, p. 182.

[30] *Some specimens of Satpanth literature*, transl. by V. M. N. Hooda, Collectanea, Leiden, 1948, vol. 1, Ser. A, N. 2, pp. 55–137.

[31] Ibid., p. 128.

[32] V. Ivanov, *The Sect of Imam Shah in Gujarat*, Journal of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic society, 1936, vol. 12, pp. 20–21.

[33] *Some specimens of Satpanth literature*, p. 108.

[34] Ibid., p. 119.

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The democratic character of the Satpanths' ideas and the fact that some of them came from the poorer masses of the people, may be seen particularly in their protest against the ancient custom of making a payment to the father of a bride. It is said in the commandments of Pīr Ṣadr-ud-dīn "Never demand money as brideprice for the daughter"[35].

The Satpanths preached honesty and diligence. "Never take money from a doubtful source as security"[36] (or earnest-money? K. A.). A *gnan* speaks of the "master" (the *imām)* loving only those who rise early to offer their prayers: in the next world the *huris* will open their arms only to early risers; the indolent, such as peasants who let the sowing time go by, will try to snatch their hands in vain and cry "Woe, woe!"[37].

The repeated use of images taken from village life by the teachers of these doctrines is good evidence that the ideas of the Satpanths circulated among the peasant population of Gujerat. Thus a *garb* ascribed to Pīr Shams says:
"Have two pairs, four, strong oxen, and firmly hold their reins in thy hand. When the field has been ploughed, leave the rest in the hands of the Guru! Take then a rosary into the hand! Plough the field of religious duties, sow the seeds of worship!... Cut up the root of a sinful act by purifying the mind. Always weed out the useless grass . . . If the tiger of truth guards thy crops, how can birds damage it? Keep company with righteousness and love, be devout to god. Then the field will be abundant, yielding plentiful crops for ever. Always remaining righteous, thou wilt reap the harvest". "Water wheels, rotating day and night, will bring much water" to the followers of the True Path, preached Pīr Ṣadr-ud-dīn[38].

Some of the Satpanth commandments evidently reflected the deep discontent of ruined and dispossessed peasants who resisted the exactions of the revenue officials and the usury and seizure of peasant lands by their creditors: "Never take bribes"; "do not live on money derived from usury"; "never make a valuation of land [i. e. buy or sell land. K. A]. It is similar to thy mother"; "never develop ambition to acquire much wealth or land"[39].

The attitudes of small traders and handicraftsmen were also reflected in the teachings of the Satpanth. One of the sectarians' commandments ran: "Never fail to return the money that thou hast borrowed, or the value of the goods purchased on credit"[40]. Stories in the *gnan* of a butcher who took pity on the starving Pīr Shams and against the decision of the inhabitants sold him a piece of meat[41], and about a merchant called Premji who invited Imām-Shāh into his house and fed him, when all the inhabitants of the village through which he was passing had refused[42], are evidence of the popularity of Satpanth ideas among the merchants and handicraft workers.

In Gujerat at the end of the XVII century the numerous followers of the sect of Imām-Shāh included "the *matiya* – a people inhabiting the districts of Khandesh

[35] Ibid. [36] Ibid., p. 120. [37] Ibid., p. 108.
[38] Ibid., p. 107. [39] Ibid., p. 120. [40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., p. 100. [42] Ibid., pp. 124–125.

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and Baglana and living by all kinds of labour" *(amr kasb-u-kār*[43] i. e. handicrafts, trade and agriculture).

The Satpanths, like the other reforming tendencies in India, denounced caste, attacked caste restrictions and taught the unity of Hindus and Muslims. In this connection we may note one of the legends of the sect which tells how Pīr Shams converted three pilgrims – a brahman, a bania and a ranagol, to his beliefs[44]. The rules of the Satpanths enjoined on the members of the sect to show hospitality and to give food and drink to all who were in need[45].

As V. Ivanov has defined it, the teachings of the Satpanths were a peculiar synthesis of Islam in its later Ismailite form, with various Hindu religious-philosophical beliefs and ideas[46].

The doctrines of Ismailism were closely interwoven with purely Hindu notions in the Satpanth teachings. The preachers of the sect called people to believe in the one god, the creator of heaven, sun, moon, wind and water, "who manifests himself through all the ages, fulfilling the hopes of those who believe on him". His last prophet was Muḥammad, and ʿAlī was "the manifestation of the true god". The god of the Satpanths was neither the god of the Muslims nor the Hindus. Sometimes he was identified with Brahma, sometimes with Vishnu or with Allah. In some hymns he is called the Pīr, the Guru. Pīr Shams according to Satpanth notions once existed in the form of Brahma[47]. God as represented by the Satpanths, saved "the great saint", the legendary ascetic Rakh Mahat, and released him from his religious vows; he revived the wife of Gomet the accursed, who had been turned into stone; he gave a mighty kingdom to Dhrava, and saved king Harichand (another mythological personage in the *Mahābhārata)*, extended his helping hand to him in trouble, and so on[48]. The Satpanth preachers taught their followers not to neglect the Puranas and Vedas, since they believed the Quran to be the last of the Vedas[49].

The Satpanths strongly condemned idol worship. "These idols of stone are scarecrows, they will never utter a word. Why are you so foolish? Cannot you realize that these idols are manufactured by man?" "These figures (idols) which you from your childhood regard as gods, are not the Deity".[50] Traditions ascribe these sayings to Pīr Shams.

The Satpanths like many other Sūfī movements, contrasted rites and ceremonies to spiritual purity and sincere faith in god[51].

[43] ʿAli Muḥammad Khān Bahādur, op. cit., vol. I, p. 320.
[44] *Some specimens of Satpanth literature*, p. 87.
[45] Ibid., p. 102.
[46] V. Ivanov, *Satpanth*, Collectanea, Leiden, 1948, vol. I, Ser. A, N. 2, p. 1.
[47] *Some specimens of Satpanth literature*, pp. 57, 59, 65, 66.
[48] Ibid., pp. 57–58.
[49] Ibid., pp. 62, 65, 74.
[50] Ibid., p. 56.
[51] Ibid., pp. 60, 61.

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The Satpanths were far from denying even that traditionally most Hindu of doctrines, the transmigration of souls. On the contrary, as we see, they themselves appealed to it in identifying the Guru Shams, a real historical personage, with the god Brahma. However, transmigration was not regarded by them as inevitable or as condemning men to the retribution which they merited for misdeeds in previous incarnations. The preachers of the Satpanth spoke of the transmigration of souls, of an unending chain of births and reincarnations, as an evil which it was necessary and possible to end.

The *gnan* and *garb* frequently mention the need for people to break free from the fatal chain of reincarnation. The only thing that could save a man from reincarnation was to follow "the true way". "O, you careless people, do not needlessly suffer in the wheel of re-birth. Follow the beliefs of the Satpanth".[52] These words are ascribed to the deified Shams, around whose personality many later legends and traditions were created reflecting the ideals of the Satpanth sect in a period several centuries removed from the life-time of the Pīr.

As has been pointed out in Soviet indology, the acceptance by Kabīr and certain other reformers of the doctrine of transmigration, which in effect justified the hard lot of the masses, condoned social oppression and enjoined passivity, was a sign of the weakness and immaturity of these *bhakti* teachings[53]. The sectarians of Gujerat, as we see, at times rejected passivity, and it was in this way, apparently, that the relatively greater maturity of the Satpanth in comparison with some other reform teachings, found its expression.

We come across appeals to obedience and submission in several examples of Satpanth literature. "A religious man never quarrels with anyone", it is said in one of the *gnans* attributed to Pīr Ṣadr-ud-dīn. "Only those who are not strong in religion feel dissatisfied"; "never dispute with anybody, whether thou beest right or wrong". "Never argue with the mukhi. Only those who are absorbed in worldly affairs, argue with the mukhi. For this they will become miserable and lose the religious reward"[54]. This preaching of submission among the Satpanths thus reflected social contradictions among the followers of the sect itself, the heads of which were simply becoming feudalized.

In the XVII century and possibly long before, the leaders were distinguished from the rank and file members of the sect. The *pīr*, his relatives, the mukhi (the leaders of the community), the *mutawallī* (the guardians of the *pīrs*' tombs) possessed considerable wealth, the primary source of which were the tithes received from the members. The payment of the tithe was obligatory among them. A *garb* of Pīr Shams declared, "O, those who believe in the Sat Panth. All of you must pay the i thes on all that you earn by physical labour"[55].

[52] Ibid., p. 69.

[53] K. A. Antonova, *Studies in the social relations and political system of India at the time of Akbar*, Moscow, 1962, p. 164 (Russian language).

[54] *Some specimens of Satpanth literature*, p. 117.

[55] Ibid., p. 80.

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The payment of the tithe was regarded as the way of "self-purification" meriting reward; the *pīrs* taught that "the sins and crimes of your former existences will be forgiven if you pay the prescribed tithes". "Do not steal by reducing what should be paid as the tithe (referring to the fixed portion of income – K. A.). "O brother, do not secretly steal by not paying the tithes"[56].

According to the evidence of ʿAlī Muḥammad Khan Bahādur, moreover, the tithe was so conscientiously paid that if anyone had ten children he either gave one of them to be the "property" (or as the dependent – *be taʿalluq*) of the Sayid (*pīr*) or paid a certain sum of money instead. The *pīrs* presented children of sect members to their sons on the occasion of marriage. The *murīds* (followers) were regarded by the *pīrs* and their offspring as a source of income and "were divided among the sons of the Sayid (Imām-Shāh) as an inheritance". Each of the sons of Pīr Imām-Shāh "enjoyed tithes received from the *murīds*"[57]. In the early nineties of the XVII century there were a few thousand *matia* and *momna* among the followers of Sayid Shāhjī, the descendant of Imām-Shah. Sayid Shāhjī spent a great deal of time in solitude, met people increasingly rarely, and when *murīds* came to him from various places he would stretch his foot out from behind a curtain so that they might touch it reverently as was the custom of the sect. As history records, it was against the rules of the followers of the sect to come to the *pīr* empty-handed so that great quantities of money – rupees, ashrafis – were poured out at the feet of Sayid Shāhjī. Quarrels over the right of inheriting the various profitable functions of *mukhi* and *mutawallī* constantly went on among the upper ranks of the sect.

Thus we have attempted in this study to show that the establishment of the power of the Delhi Sultans in Northern India and the rule of the dynasties that succeeded them showed their effect in numerous spheres of social and economic life. It led to a marked strengthening of feudal landownership by the state and to a wide diffusion of forms of conditional feudal tenure, seriously impairing patrimonial landholding and other transition forms of tribal property which up to the XIII century existed in the agrarian relations of Northern India.

The coming to power of foreign feudal lords also led to a great intensification of feudal exploitation, which proved a powerful factor reacting on the internal processes at work in the village commune. All this stimulated and hastened the process of development taking place in the country and strengthened the feudal system. The formation of the Delhi Sultanate in India created conditions for a very wide propagation of Islam. The fact that Islam became the official religion bolstering up the feudal state, opened the way to numerous sectarian teachings, reviving the patriarchal-democratic traditions and principles of early Islam, which had been forgotten by the official religion. It was the Muslim sects and Sufism that influenced many of the reform teachings or *bhakti*.

[56] Ibid., pp. 56, 61, 64, 77, 80, 84, 88.

[57] ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Bahādur, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 320–321.

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Bairām Khān in Persia

Sukumar Ray

Bairām Khān Khān Khānān served under three Mughul emperors Bābur, Humāyūn and Akbar. His main contributions to Indian history are two: he was the real author of the Mughul restoration and he piloted the ship of the Mughul state in the early years of Akbar's reign at a critical juncture when the emperor was a boy unable to cope with the various problems that confronted him. If Humāyūn lost the empire of Bābur at Chausa and Kanauj, Bairām recovered it at Māchīwārā and Sirhind; but the victories of Māchīwārā and Sirhind would not have been possible if the Mughuls had not had the bases of Qandahār and Kābul during 1545–1554 from which preparations were made for the restoration. And Qandahār and Kābul could not have been obtained in 1545 without the help of the Persians. This Persian military help and moral support was the consequence of Humāyūn's visit to Persia and the Persian court. Humāyūn's odyssey in Persia is thus the turning-point in his career: without it the Mughul restoration might not have occurred at all. It was Bairām Khān who suggested the idea of going to Persia and seeking Persian help. Because Humāyūn's father had sought and obtained military aid from Shāh Isma'īl of Persia and as a Shiah Bairām was *persona grata* to the Shāh of Persia, who was a zealous champion of the Shiah faith, and the fact that his ancestors were once the rulers of territories in Persia, might, Bairām expected, weigh with the Persian king. Bairām not only led Humāyūn to Persia but also guided him through his stay in that country and served as the intermediary between him and Shāh Tahmāsp. In this paper is narrated the story of Bairām in Persia and of the part he played there. The narrative commences from Humāyūn's departure from Sind and his march through Balūchistān to Qandahār.

I. Bairām with Humāyūn proceeds to Qandahār but is forced to lead his master to Persia

On July 11, 1543, about three years and two months after the battle of Kanauj, Humāyūn commenced his journey, abandoning all his hopes in India and left the territory of Sind for Qandahār which was part of the dominions of his brother Kāmrān. Bairām along with Humāyūn marched to Sehwān and from there via Gandāva and Sibī advanced as far as Shāl (Quetta). As they obtained report of Mīrzā

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Kāmrān's hostility, they retreated to Mashtang. Bairām advised Humāyūn to go to Shāl and Mashtang where he expected to draw the Afghāns and the followers of Mīrzā ʿAskarī to his master's side[1]. Plundered by robbers, almost frozen by cold and without adequate provisions and clothing, the royal party or the party of refugees arrived at Mashtang which is about one hundred and fifty miles south-east of Qandahār (beginning of December 1543).

In the meantime Shāh Husain Arghūn had informed Kāmrān that Humāyūn was proceeding towards Qandahār. Mīrzā ʿAskarī, who held Qandahār on behalf of Kāmrān, was instructed by the latter to fortify that place and to forbid Humāyūn to go there. While the royal party was encamped at Mashtang, ʿAskarī planned to capture Humāyūn suddenly and sent one Jai Bahādur Uzbeg, who had knowledge of the locality, to get accurate information about the situation of the royal party. This Jai Bahādur or Chūlī Uzbeg, as he is called in some chronicles, had served Humāyūn in India and feeling for his old master, he determined to reveal the design of Mīrzā ʿAskarī. He rapidly came on horseback, reached the royal camp at midday and enquired where the camp of Bairām Beg was. The men pointed it out and he ran to the tent of Bairām Beg to whom he revealed the design of Mīrzā ʿAskarī to capture Humāyūn and warned him that there was no time for deliberation: they should move immediately[2]. Bairām hastened to the royal tent and gave Humāyūn this information. Preparations were accordingly made for immediate departure. Khvāja Muʿazzam and Bairām Beg were deputed to bring Hamīda Begam and the child Akbar. Hamīda Begam was hastily placed on horseback, but the child was left behind to the mercy of his uncle, as it was feared he could not bear the hardship of the journey. All idea of going to Qandahār was now given up. It was at this critical juncture that Bairām Beg induced Humāyūn to go to Īrān and try his fortune there; and history has proved the wisdom of his decision[3].

Humāyūn had to leave Mashtang in extreme haste and he had not even fifty men with him when he proceeded to Garmsīr. After the party had advanced a short distance and as it was an exceptionally dark night, Bairām Beg suggested to his master that they should return to Mashtang and take ʿAskarī by surprise, who, he believed, would be busy there at that time in gathering Humāyūn's wealth and property that had been left behind in their haste. But Humāyūn did not agree, as he said he was bent on pilgrimage[4]. The royal party proceeded through the desert, but through the kindly help of the Balūch chief, Malik Hātī, reached Garmsīr.

[1] Gulbadan Begam, *Humāyūn-nāma*, London, 1902, p. 165.

[2] Jauhar, Sir Jadunāth Sarkār's MS., p. 105; British Museum MS., fol. 63a–b; Rylands Library MS., fol. 58a–b and Faizī Sirhindī's recension, India Office MS., ff. 49b–50a. Bāyazīd, India Office MS., fol. 2b. *Tārīkh-i-Alfī*, India Office MS., fol. 418a; *Tārīkh-i-Khāndān-i-Tīmūrīya*, fol. 285a; *Zubdat-ut-Tawārīkh*, India Office MS., fol. 77a. *Tārīkh-i-Amīr Mahmūd*, British Museum MS., fol. 201b where the incident is related but the name of the person is not mentioned.

[3] *M. R. (Maāsir-i-Rahīmī)* I, p. 755.

[4] *A. N.* (*Akbar-nāma*, Engl. translation) I, p. 392.

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Here Bairām Beg advised Humāyūn to write to the Shāh and inform him of his intention to visit Persia and meet him[5]. Bairām considered it necessary to secure the Shāh's permission before entering his territory. Accordingly Humāyūn sent from Garmsīr a letter to this effect through Chūlī Beg to the Shāh of Īrān on December 29, 1543. But he could not wait at Garmsīr for the arrival of the Shāh's reply as ʿAskarī had despatched a force to pursue and capture him. He therefore crossed the Helmand and entered the province of Sīstān which was outside the jurisdiction of Mīrzā ʿAskarī and Kāmrān. The odyssey of Bairām with Humāyūn in Persia began.

II. Bairām with Humāyūn proceeds from Sīstān to the Shāh's capital

Humāyūn and his party were kindly received at Sīstān by the governor Ahmad Sultān Shāmlū. Here Humāyūn was joined by several chiefs, Hājī Muhammad, Ḥasan Kōka and others, who had deserted Mīrzā ʿAskarī. These two advised Humāyūn to return to Zamīn Dāwār as Amīr Beg, governor of Zamīn Dāwār and Chalma Beg, governor of Bist, and many of the followers of Mīrza ʿAskarī would desert him and help Humāyūn and with their help it would be quite possible to recover the territory of Qandahār. Bairām Beg and Ahmad Sultān Shāmlū dissuaded Humāyūn from returning to Zamīn Dāwār and accepting their advice[6]. Humāyūn accordingly pursued his plan of visiting the Shāh of Īrān. According to Jauhar, it was from Sīstān that Humāyūn despatched the above letter to Shāh Tahmāsp: Bairām Beg and other nobles advised him to write to the Shāh as he might take offence for having entered his territory without permission[7]. Bairām also sent letters to his kinsmen, the Turkamāns, and a petition to the Shāh and he received a reply from Shāh Tahmāsp[8]. We have no copy of Bairām's letter to the Shāh or his reply.

Humāyūn and Bairām were however forced to enter the Shāh's territory without his formal permission. On receipt of Humāyūn's letter Shāh Tahmāsp became exceedingly glad that the ruler of Hindūstān had sought the protection of his court. He sent instructions to all governors and officers to receive the king and his party with due respect and give him a royal reception wherever he should choose to halt. From the letter of instructions to the governor of Herāt we may infer that Humāyūn was given a princely reception everywhere and especially at Herāt. There can be no doubt that such a display of magnificence was staged in order to exhibit the might and splendour of the Safavī court. It may be noted that in the *farmān* Shāh Tahmāsp calls Bairām Beg *amīr-i-muʿazzam* or the chief noble and his name is specifically mentioned with the Mughul emperor. The Shāh instructed

[5] *M. R.* I, p. 575. [6] *M. R.* I, p. 576.

[7] Jauhar, MS. Sarkār, pp. 109–110, B. M. MS., fol. 66a; R. L. MS., ff. 60b–61a; Panjab University (Lahore) MS., fol. 49b.

[8] *M. R.* II, pp. 17–18.

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each governor, when Humāyūn should arrive at his place, to present nine horses: three for the king's special use and one for the chief *amīr*, Bairām Beg[9].

The party proceeded towards Herāt by way of the fort of Ūk and Farāh where Humāyūn received the reply of the Shāh. Humāyūn was given a grand reception at Herāt whose governor Muhammad Khān arranged a splendid banquet in his honour. The sights of Herāt pleased Humāyūn and he stayed there for about a month. Bairām spent this time with Humāyūn in visiting beautiful spots, the shrines of great saints, gardens and buildings, memorials of former kings, in and around the city. The particular reason for their further stay at Herāt was to attend the New Year festival which the Persians celebrate with the highest pomp and grandeur.

Towards the end of March, 1544[10] they left for Mashhad by way of Jām. At Jām they visited the shrines of Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad-i-Jāmī and Shāh Qāsim-i-Anwār. On April 8, 1544 they reached Mashhad, particularly sacred to the Shiahs for the shrine of Imām Rizā. Very often Humāyūn used to visit it and even spent whole nights there to say his prayers and made lavish gifts to the priests and servants. Bairām as a Shiah must have valued this visit to Mashhad and associated himself with his master in his pious activities at the shrine of the Imām.

About May 19, 1544[11] the party left Mashhad and in two days reached Nishāpūr, world-famed for its important bard. The governor received the king with proper respect and Bairām with his master visited the famous turquoise mines near Nishāpūr. From Nishāpūr they went to Sabzawār where they remained for forty days. The governor gave sumptuous entertainment in honour of Humāyūn. From Sabzawār they proceeded to Bistām via Sūfīābād and Dāmaghān. Here Bairām along with Humāyūn visited the shrine of Shaikh Bāyazīd Bistāmī. They left Bistām for Samnān via Khurqān. At Samnān they visited the tomb of Shaikh ʿAlā-ud-Daula Samnānī. From Samnān the party proceeded to Qazvīn by way of Sāūj Bulāgh and the fort of Dars.

III. Bairām Beg as an envoy to Shāh Tahmāsp

According to Jauhar, Humāyūn sent Bairām Beg as his ambassador to the Shāh from the fort of Dars in response to the Shāh's letter. Other historians state that Bairām was sent from Qazvīn[12]. Jauhar's account of Bairām Beg at the court of

[9] Bāyazīd, fol. 5b; printed text, p. 18.

[10] According to *Afzal-ut-Tawārīkh*, British Museum MS., fol. 121b, Humāyūn reached the vicinity of Herāt on February 21, 1544. He witnessed the *Naurūz* festival (March 21–27, 1544) at Herāt.

[11] *Tārīkh-i-Amīr Mahmūd*, fol. 206a. *Rauzat-us-Safavīya*, Asiatic Society of Bengal MS., fol. 87a–b.

[12] Jauhar, MS. Sarkār, p. 117; Panjab University MS., fol. 52b; B. M. MS., fol. 69a; R. L. MS., fol. 65a. A. N.; *Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī*; Firishta, Bombay ed. I, p. 412. ʿAbdullah Muhammad, *Tārīkh-i-Gujarāt* III, p. 1008. *Iqbāl-nāma*, India Office

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Shāh Tahmāsp differs from that given by other writers. Bairām Beg, attended by ten[13] horsemen, went to Qazvīn and paid his respects to the Shāh. Soon after his arrival Shāh Tahmāsp ordered him to cut off his hair and put on a Persian cap. Bairām represented that as he was the servant of another monarch, he could only do so with his master's consent. Shāh Tahmāsp was displeased and told Bairām that he might do as he pleased, but in order to frighten him the Shāh ordered some prisoners sentenced to death to be executed in his presence[14]. Abu-'l-Fazl says that Bairām met the Shāh near his summer-quarters, Sultānīya and Sūrlīq. Bairām conveyed his master's message to the Shāh and then returned to Qazvīn "with joyful foot". Whether his joy was due to Shāh Tahmāsp's kind treatment, as Abu-'l-Fazl would have us believe, or to his having easily escaped from the Shāh's fury, can obviously be guessed. ʿAbd-ul-Bāqī gives a rosy picture of Bairām at the Shāh's court which presents a striking contrast to the account given by Jauhar. When Bairām arrived near the Shāh's court at Ilāq Sūrlīq, he was welcomed with a princely reception, First, the Turkamāns who were his kinsmen and then the Persians with the grandees of the realm came to receive him by order of the Shāh and he was granted audience with the Shāh with great honour and pomp. The poor pen of the author cannot adequately describe the unique treatment that was accorded to his patron's father by the ruler of Irān – so writes ʿAbd-ul-Bāqī. The Shāh also had discussions with Bairām about the meeting between him and Humāyūn and then Bairām returned to Qazvīn[15].

Bāyazīd dismisses the matter very briefly. He says that Bairām Beg was sent to the Shāh in advance and he presented his master's letter at the interview in Zanjān and then returned with a reply. From Bāyazīd it appears probable that Bairām was sent after Humāyūn had arrived at Qazvīn[16]. Nizām-ud-dīn simply says that Bairām was sent from Qazvīn to the Shāh who was at Sūrlīq and he returned with a letter from the Shāh in which the latter welcomed Humāyūn and expressed pleasure at his coming[17]. Babāunī, as might be expected, merely summarizes Nizām-ud-dīn. Firishta reproduces Nizām-ud-dīn's words but says that Bairām met the Shāh at Bilāq Qadār[18]. The chroniclers of the Safavī side do not refer to the sending of Bairām Beg as Humāyūn's envoy to the Shāh.

MS., fol. 75b. *Tārīkh-i-Alfī*, fol. 418b. *Maʿdan-i-akhbār-i-Ahmadī*, India Office MS., fol. 79a. *ʿAlamārāi ʿAbbāsī*, Teheran ed., p. 75. From the *Jahān-ārā* it seems also that Bairām could not have met the Shāh at Qazvīn, for we are told at fol. 222b, British Museum MS., that the Shāh left Qazvīn for Ilāq on Thursday, Rabiʿ-us-Sānī 14 whereas Bairām went to the Shāh in Jumāda-al-awwal.

[13] Jauhar, India Office MS., fol. 27a; B. M. MS., fol. 69a; R. L. MS., fol. 65a; Faizī Sirhindī's recension, fol. 53b. MS. Sarkār, p. 117 and Panjab University MS., fol. 52b, have two (دو).

[14] Jauhar, MS. Sarkār, p. 117; Panjab University MS., ff. 52b–53a; B. M. MS., fol. 69a; R. L. MS., fol. 65a; Faizī Sirhindī's recension, ff. 53b–54a.

[15] *M. R.* I, p. 590. [16] Bāyazīd, fol. 10b.

[17] *Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, Lucknow ed., p. 209.

[18] *Tārīkh*, Lucknow, 1905, ed. I, p. 236.

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Jauhar thus tells an entirely different story. There is no reason for discrediting the version of Jauhar. Abu-'l-Fazl, Nizām-ud-dīn, ʿAbd-ul-Bāqī and other court historians would naturally hesitate to write anything which was insulting to a king of the Mughul dynasty or to his chief nobleman. Bāyazīd who sometimes utters truth, and Badāūnī from whom truth might be expected, are too brief to be of any use. The chroniclers of the Safavī side might naturally conceal facts which would blacken the reputation of their monarch as exploiting the misfortunes of a helpless guest. Jauhar was in Humāyūn's service and there cannot be any reason why he should have given a false account which is derogatory to his patron king and his valued ambassador.

IV. Bairām with Humāyūn at the Safavī court

When Humāyūn reached Qazvīn, the capital of Īrān, Khvāja ʿAbd-ul-Ghanī with the grandees and the people of the place received the fugitive monarch with ostentatious hospitality. Shāh Tahmāsp had already left the capital for his summer-quarters. Humāyūn left Qazvīn on the fourth day. Next morning Bairām, we are told by Jauhar, returned and joined the party[19]. There is some confusion about Bairām's movement. Bairām, according to Jauhar, met the Shāh at Qazvīn and therefore he should have met the Mughul party on its way to Qazvīn or at Qazvīn if he stayed on at that place after the Shāh's departure. As Bairām met Humāyūn on his way from Qazvīn to the Shāh's court, it seems that Bairām accompanied the Shāh from Qazvīn to his summer-residence or to the fountain of Jaky Jaky for which he left the capital, and that he was returning from there. This view makes a compromise between the statements of Jauhar that Bairām met the Shāh at Qazvīn and that of other historians who say that he met the Shāh in his summer-capital.

In two days the Mughul party arrived near the summer-city of the Shāh where the two monarchs were to meet. The chroniclers differ as to the place where the Shāh was staying at this time and where the meeting took place. Ilāq Sūrlīq, Abhar, Sultānīya, Bilāq Qadār are some of the places mentioned, while according to Abu-'l-Fazl the meeting-place was between Abhar and Sultānīya. The Shāh of Persia had been arranging for the reception of Humāyūn with ceremony and magnificence becoming the Safavī court. When Humāyūn arrived within one league of the Shāh's camp, he was received by the princes of the royal family, Sām Mīrzā and Bahrām Mīrzā, brothers of Shāh Tahmāsp, and others. When he approached the Shāh's camp (third week of August 1544), Shāh Tahmāsp advanced a few steps, embraced Humāyūn and seated him to his right on the carpet. At the desire of the Shāh, Humāyūn wore the Persian cap *(tāj)*. A grand reception was held in honour of his arrival.

[19] Jauhar, MS. Sarkār, p. 118; B. M. MS., fol. 69b; R. L. MS., fol. 65b. Bāyazīd, fol. 10b, says that Bairām met Humāyūn when the latter arrived near Zanjān.

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From the very beginning Humāyūn received ill-treatment at the hands of the Shāh. The traditional rivalry of the Safavī and the Mughul dynasties and the differences between the Shiahs and the Sunnīs were the real causes of the Shāh's treatment of Humāyūn. Next morning Shāh Tahmāsp was leaving for Sultānīya and when Humāyūn paid his respects, the Shāh did not respond. Humāyūn became mortified at this and though he accompanied the Shāh to Sultānīya, he halted at the tomb of Sultān Muhammad Khudabanda who was a champion of the Shiah faith and repented for having sought the protection of so ungenerous a king as Shāh Tahmāsp. The Shāh sent a message to Humāyūn that if he would accept the Shiah creed, he would give the Mughul king all necessary help; otherwise he would be thrown into the fire. Humāyūn objected but was advised by Qāzī Jahān, the Shāh's *vazīr*, to come to a compromise in view of the special circumstances in which he was placed. We are told by Firishta that Bairām Beg also advised moderation and compromise[20]. Humāyūn had therefore no other alternative but to make a confession of the Shiah faith and naturally the members of his party also followed suit. In this matter Bairām exerted his influence upon his master not as a Shiah but as a Mughul servant. No chronicler accuses him of any Shiite bias during his stay at the Safavī court.

It seems that Humāyūn's movement in Īrān was dictated by the Shāh. In accordance with his instruction Humāyūn was taken to hunt at Takht-i-Sulaimān. Bairām with his master viewed the scenes of that famous historical city. Shāh Tahmāsp also joined the party which remained several days encamped on the hunting grounds. One day Humāyūn sent several pieces of diamonds and rubies through Bairām Beg as presents to the Persian monarch with a message that these were brought from Hindūstān expressly for him. Jauhar says that one of these diamonds was very large. This was the diamond Bābur obtained after the defeat of Ibrāhīm Lodī from the family of Rājā Bikramājit of Gwalior and most probably the celebrated *Koh-i-Nūr*. The Shāh was astonished to see these precious stones and his jewellers estimated that they were 'above all price'. He was pleased to accept such valuable presents and conferred on Bairām Beg the title of Khān[21].

[20] *Tārīkh* I, p. 237.

[21] Jauhar, India Office MS., fol. 29a; B. M. MS., fol. 74b; Faizī Sirhindī's recension, fol. 58b. According to the *Afzal-ut-Tawārīkh*, fol. 124b, Bairām Beg was given the title of Khān and Rukn-us-Saltanat when Humāyūn took leave of the Shāh. From *A. N.* I, p. 440 and *Iqbāl-nāma* I, fol. 77a, it seems that Bairām Beg received the title of Khān from Shāh Tahmāsp when Humāyūn was to leave the Safavī court. *Ṃ. R.* II, pp. 19–20, says that at the time of parting Bairām received the title of Khān from the Shāh as well as from Humāyūn, but the Shāh was more responsible for granting this favour. The *ʿĀlamārāi ʿAbbāsī*, p. 76, says that Tahmāsp conferred on Bairām the title of Khān Khānān which is wrong. The *Maʿdan-i-akhbār-i-Ahmadī*, fol. 173b, says that Humāyūn conferred on Bairām the title of Khān in recognition of his services after the conquest of Qandahār when he was appointed its governor.

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The granting of a title to his own servant by the Shāh was derogatory to the prestige of Humāyūn. Humāyūn had of course no kingdom; yet he went to Īrān as a king: he was not a vassal of the Shāh. To confer on Bairām the title of Khān was certainly to pose as a superior sovereign and treat Humāyūn as a subordinate chief. ʿAbd-ul-Bāqī probably realized this point of view and this is why he tries to explain away the matter by saying that Bairām received the title of Khān both from Humāyūn and Tahmāsp.[22] At Qazvīn Bairām had refused to wear the Persian cap on the ground that he was the servant of another monarch, but he saw his monarch was obliged to wear that cap in order to please his exacting host. So Bairām had to accept the title, though his loyalty might have prompted him to decline that honour.

The rejoicings of hunting were, it appears, immediately followed by estrangement of feeling between the two monarchs. After that for two months there was no intercourse of any kind between them. It seems that the wrath of the Shāh reached its climax during this period. But the Shāh was obliged to change his attitude towards Humāyūn on account of the persuasions of his sister, Sultānam Begam, as well as of his *diwān*, Qāzī Jahān. After this reconciliation the remaining days of Humāyūn's life at the Safavī court were spent in peace: in hunting, rejoicing and festive parties in and around Takht-i-Sulaimān. At Sūj Bulāq Shāh Tahmāsp and Humāyūn entered the hunting-ground together and after them Bahrām Mīrzā and Sām Mīrzā, brothers of the Shāh. The next to enter was Bairām Beg who was followed by the other officers of the Shāh and of Humāyūn[23]. Another hunt took place at Sulaimān's Pool. They played polo and there was a display of archery. Bairām Beg and Hājī Muhammad Kokī distinguished themselves by their skill in archery and, according to Abu-'l-Fazl, received the title of Khān and Sultān respectively[24]. The Shāh arranged a grand farewell entertainment also in honour of Humāyūn. After the festivities were over the two monarchs were to part and near the 'charming spot' of Miyāna, Shāh Tahmāsp bade him farewell.

V. Bairām's return from Persia with his master

At the time of parting Shāh Tahmāsp gave Bairām Khān the roll of twelve thousand Persians who were to form the auxiliary force under Prince Murād. Bairām had represented to the Shāh the desire of Humāyūn to return via Ardabīl,

[22] *M. R.* II, pp. 19–20.

[23] *Majāmiʿ-ul-Akhbār*, India Office MS., fol. 392a. According to Firishta I, p. 236, after Humāyūn Bairām Beg entered and after Bairām came Bahrām Mīrzā and Sām Mīrzā, but this does not seem very probable.

[24] *A. N.* I, pp. 440–441; Calcutta Būhār Library MS. NO. 45, fol. 170b. The *Afzal-ut-Tawārīkh*, fol. 124b, says that these two were awarded the titles of Khān and Sultān at the time of parting. According to Jauhar, Bairām had already received the title of Khān before this as has been mentioned above.

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'the cradle of the Safavī familty'. The Shāh was pleased to grant this favour. In three days the party reached Tabrīz and there Bairām along with Humāyūn visited the splendid buildings, the memorials of ancient kings, and the pleasure-parks of the city. At Ardabīl they visited the tombs of Shaikh Safī-ud-dīn, the founder of the Safavī dynasty, and of Shāh Ismā'īl. From Ardabīl they proceeded to the Caspian Sea and came back to Ardabīl to proceed towards Qazvīn. They reached Qazvīn by way of Sarāb, Khalkhāl, Tārum and Manjil. But Humāyūn and Bairām could not take any rest at Qazvīn as they had intended to do, and were obliged to leave the capital by order of Shāh Tahmāsp who had also arrived there the very same day. After continued marches the party reached Sabzawār. According to Abu-'l-Fazl, Humāyūn had sent Hamīda Bānū Begam and her attendants from Miyāna by the straight road towards Qandahār under Hājī Muhammad Khān and he rejoined this party at Sabzawār[25]. Jauhar, however, says that it was from Sabzawār that Humāyūn sent part of his men with Hamīda Bānū Begam by way of Tabas Kīlakī, while he himself proceeded to Mashhad[26].

Bairām had the privilege of thus revisiting Mashhad and the tomb of Imām 'Alī Rizā. The elite of Mashhad saw Humāyūn and Bairām. Maulānā Jamshīd the enigmatist and Mullā Hairatī the poet waited upon Humāyūn at the holy city. It was at Mashhad that Bairām Khān showed favour and patronage to the poet[27]. Bāyazīd says that Bairām Khān took a log of bitter almond wood from the tomb which he afterwards used as his arms in his campaign against the Hazāras on his way from Qandahār to Kābul[28]. As a Shiah Bairām very much valued his two visits to Mashhad and the tomb of Imām Rizā. Even after leaving Persia and returning to India he maintained contact with the holy city. While he was in power as the virtual head of the Mughul state, he had a lamp and a standard, studded with precious jewels, specially made as offerings for the tomb. The lamp was sent but the standard remained half-finished and fell into the royal hands after the battle of Gunāchaur. And it was in accordance with his desire that his mortal remains were brought to Mashhad and buried near the mausoleum of Imām Rizā in the plot of land which he had during his lifetime procured at enormous cost for this purpose[29].

Bairām with his master left Mashhad for Jām which they visited a second time. There is an inscription of Humāyūn at the shrine of Ahmad al-Jāmī commemorating his arrival there on December 29, 1544. The king wrote a verse with his own hand on the marble covering the tomb. 'Abd-ul-Bāqī, the author of the *Maāsir-i-Rahīmī*, visited the shrine in person in 1611 and saw and read the verse, and he adds that Bairām Khān also wrote one verse on the tomb[30]. From Jām the party

[25] *A. N.* I, pp. 443, 445; *Ma'dan-i-akhbār-i-Ahmadī*, fol. 81b.
[26] Jauhar, India Office MS., fol. 32a; B. M. MS., fol. 83a; R. L. MS., fol. 72a.
[27] *M. R.* II, pp. 120–121. [28] Bāyazīd, fol. 14a.
[29] *Ma'dan-i-akhbār-i-Ahmadī*, fol. 192a–b.
[30] *M. R.* I, p. 588. Ney Elias in J. R. A. S., 1897, p. 47, gives the inscription of Humāyūn. It may be that Bairām Khān's inscription which was noticed by 'Abd-ul-Bāqī in 1611 is still there and may be found after careful search.

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went to Kharjird where Bairām and his master visited the tomb of Shāh Qāsim-i-Anwār. From there they proceeded to Sīstān via Tabas Masīnān, Qilʿa-i-Kāh and the fortress of Ūk.

At Sīstān Humāyūn found ten thousand horsemen or according to some chronicles twelve thousand, under the nominal command of Prince Murād who was a child, but under the guardianship of Budāgh Khān. It is interesting to note that among the nobles and high officers engaged in this expedition was Muhammadī Mīrzā, the grandson of Mīrzā Jahān Shāh who was related to Bairām Khān. As Humāyūn left Sīstān, he entered the dominion of his brother Mīrzā Kāmrān who was then the undisputed master of Qandahār, Kābul, Ghaznī as well as Badakhshān. By order of Humāyūn and Bairām the Persian troops laid siege to the fort of Bist which soon surrendered[31]. On March 21,1545 Humāyūn and Bairām arrived at the vicinity of Qandahār with a full Persian force.

VI. The work of Bairām in Īrān

Bairām Beg was mainly responsible for Humāyūn's going to Īrān, for it was he who advised Humāyūn to seek shelter there[32]. Bairām was a Shiah and his ancestors were rulers in Īrān. It is therefore quite probable that he had some prestige at the Safavī court and was held in respect by the Īrānians. In Persia Bairām met his kinsmen, the Qarāquyanlū Turks, and saw his ancestral home. Shāh Tahmāsp intended to keep Bairām in his service as a vassal chief of the Turks and offered him the government of Diyār Bakr and Āzarbāijān which had belonged to his ancestors Qarā Yūsuf and Mīrzā Jahān Shāh. But Bairām, true to his salt, did not agree to abandon Humāyūn at such a critical time when he required his services most. He abandoned his kinsmen and ancestral place in his loyalty to his master, but he refused the offer in such a manner as not to disoblige the Shāh[33]. Bairām never bore at heart any feeling of disloyalty to Humāyūn or preference for the Shāh. As an ambassador of Humāyūn he had refused to wear the Persian Shiah cap because, he pointed out, he was the servant of another monarch. He was first a servant of the Mughul dynasty and then a Shiah. In all his trials and tribulations of exile he proved a valued guide to Humāyūn. It was Bairām who advised moderation and compromise when Bahrām Mīrzā organized a conspiracy against Humāyūn and alienated the Shāh. The Shāh also, after reconciliation, called Bairām Beg privately and discussed with him his master's affairs[34]. Shāh Tahmāsp formed a high opinion of Bairām and calls him *amīr-i-muʿazzam* in his *farmān* to the governor of Herāt; and he asked Humāyūn to send Bairām as his envoy to the Safavī court before the two kings met. It was, as Amīn Ahmad Rāzī

[31] *M. R.* I, p. 595, says that Bairām Khān ordered ʿAlī Taklū to capture Bist.
[32] *Maʿadan-i-akhbār-i-Ahmadī*, fol. 173a; M. R. I, p. 575.
[33] *M. R.* I, pp. 594–595; II, p. 20.
[34] Firishta, Lucknow ed. I, p. 237; Bombay ed. I, p. 446.

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says, in recognition of his ability that he conferred the title of Khān on Bairām[35]. The Shāh refers to Bairām in his letter to Akbar as well when he wrote to express condolences for his father's death and congratulations on his accession[36]. In estimating the services of the officers who served Humāyūn in exile, Abu-'l-Fazl remarks: "The head of the faithful servants was Bairām Khān, who throughout waited on the stirrup of His Majesty Jahānbānī Jannat-āshiyānī as if he were his good Fortune"[37]. This high encomium of Abu-'l-Fazl is not altogether unjust.

[35] *Haft Iqlīm*, India Office MS., fol. 182a.
[36] British Museum MS. Add. 7688, fol. 116a.
[37] *A. N.* I, p. 447.

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Some Economic Aspects of the Reign of ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh (1626—1672)

H. K. Sherwani

The long reign of ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh of Golkonḍa-Haiderābād is one of the enigmas of South Indian history. He came to the throne on the death of his scholarly and peace-loving father, Sulṭān Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh, on January 31, 1626. The reign was marked by the farthest extent of the Quṭbshāhī dominions, but at the same time this was the period when the state became a vassal of the Mughal Empire. The frontiers of the Quṭbshāhī dominions touched the walls of Gingee in the south, while it was to Gaṇḍikōtā in the present Cuddapah district that the French traveller Tavernier had to go to see the Quṭbshāhī governor. In the north the boundary marched with the frontier of Orissa. The southern extension was mainly due to the strategy and statesmanship of Mīrzā Muḥammad Saʿīd, surnamed Mīr Jumlā, who, as is well-known, crossed over to the Mughal camp in 1656 and added to his laurels by his conquest of Assam for the Mughal Empire and for India. But in the north-west the Mughals were able not merely to subjugate a very large part of Tilangānā, but by the bilateral treaty of 1636 had actually reduced the whole state to the status of a Mughal protectorate, forcing ʿAbdu'llāh to coin money in Shāh Jahān's name and to have the name of the Emperor mentioned in Friday prayers.

While our Persian chronicles are replete with the martial exploits of ʿAbdu'llāh's generals and the somewhat exaggerated accounts of the pomp and glory of the dying kingdom, they are silent with regard to the economic life of the people. Fortunately we have a mass of information left to us by European travellers and Factory records and in this paper an attempt has been made to describe this aspect of life in the kingdom based mainly on these data.

Abbrevations

J. I. H.	Journal of Indian History, Trivandrum,
J. A. S. B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Numismatic supplement, Calcutta,
B. N. J.	British Numismatic Journal,
J. Bom. Hist. Soc.	Journal of the Bombay Historical Society, Bombay,
J. Pak. Hist. S.	Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi.

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Coinage

The reign of ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh saw a veritable plethora of coins current in the kingdom, a phenomenon which is not met with in any other reign[1]. We have rather a cryptical remark of Firishta, corroborated in part by the French traveller Thèvenot, that it was only copper coins that were minted at Golkonḍa-Haidarābād, and that the gold coins current in the kingdom were the *hons* originally minted at Vijayanagar, while the silver coin was the Mughal *rupee* and its subdivisions the half-*rupee* and the quarter-*rupee*[2]. On the other hand we have a whole list of coins current in the kingdom mentioned by other foreign travellers and in greater detail in the correspondence of the factors of the Dutch and the English East India Companies[3]. We have the old *pagoda* or *hon* and the new *pagoda*, the Mughal rupee and the Golkonḍa *rupee*, *fānam*, *nevel* and *tār* current in the kingdom. It is further expressly stated that the *pagoda* was actually being struck in different parts of the Quṭbshāhī state and even at Bījāpur. The queer thing is that while the 'new' and the 'old' *pagoda* varied little in their intrinsic value, they differed in terms of their purchasing power, as it was only the 'old' coin which the

[1] There is an excellent article entitled *Coins Current in the Kingdom of Golconda* by P. M. Joshi in the *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, June 1943. Since then much new light has been thrown on the numismatics of the Quṭbshāhī State and some new coins discovered. Moreover the learned author has, to a large extent, dealt only with such coins as are dealt with by European travellers especially Tavernier, and has not discussed the inscriptions on the purely Golkonḍa-Ḥaidarābād coins. Moreover certain matters contained in the article required further elucidation.

[2] Firishta, I, pp. 537–538, referred to by P. M. Joshi, op. cit., p. 85 n. 2 and 3. *The Indian Travels of Thèvenot and Carreri*, ed. by S. N. Sen, New Delhi, 1949, p. 136. Thèvenot quite wrongly says that the 'pecha' was coined "at Bhāgnagar" although there was never such a mint in existence. Quṭbshāhī coins were minted at Golkonḍa before the capital was shifted to Ḥaidarābād by Muḥammad-Qulī Quṭb Shāh in 1592, when evidently the mint was also shifted to the new capital. The last known coin struck at Golkonḍa in the earlier phase of that mint is dated 992/1584, and the first known coin struck at Ḥaidarābād was in 1012/1603. We have no evidence of any mint in the legendary "Bhāgnagar". See H. K. Sherwani, *The Bhāgmatī Legend*, J. I. H., April, 1960, pp. 119–130.

[3] We have contemporary notices of the coins current during the reign of 'Abdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh, among other publications, in T. Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of the Countries round the Bay of Bengal*, Cambridge, 1905; W. H. Moreland, *Relations of Golconda*, London, 1931, containing the Relations of Methwold, Schoerer and an anonymous writer; J. B. Tavernier, *Travels in India*, Oxford, 1925; F. Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, Oxford, 1914; W. Foster's voluminous series *The English Factories in India*, 13 vols., Oxford, 1906–1927, has now become a classic, and it throws a flood of light on events in the Deccan which is not met with elsewhere.

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king demanded by way of revenue and other taxes. Besides these there were quite a few European coins current such as Spanish *reals*-of-eight, Portuguese *pardaos*, Dutch *guilders*, Venetian *sequins*, the English double *albert*, *noble* and *ryder*, Siamese *ticuls*, Persian *lārīs* and *ʿabbāsīs* and Gujrati *muḥammadīs*. This nearly completes the kaleidiscopic circle of the coins current in Tilang-Andhra in the time of ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh and contrasts with the simple numismatics of his predecessors[4].

This complication is doubly complicated by reason of the licences given by the king's representative to agencies such as the Dutch East India Company to coin *rupees* and *hons* with their emblems[5]. To make matters still worse, the value of the

[4] Practically the whole list of these foreign coins will be found in P. M. Joshi's article, op. cit.

[5] It is interesting to note that the Dutch at Pulicat coined both copper and silver. Joshi has reproduced in his article the complete page containing the drawings of "Golconda Money" appearing in the 1678 edition of J. B. Tavernier's *Travels*, and has also described the inscriptions of the coins appearing on that plate on pp. 88–89. He has not attempted to read the inscription on the Pulicat coin reproduced. It has in fact the usual seal of ʿĀlamgīr, which reads:

Obv. سکه زد در جهان چو بدر منیر شاه اورنگ زیب عالم گیر

Rev. سنه جلوس میمنت مانوس — ضرب 080

On the reverse the Persian hemistich is superimposed by the initials of the crest re the Dutch East India Company, V(ereenigde) O(stindische) C(ompagnie). The inason why it is difficult to read the Persian inscription is that it is also engraved of the European style, i. e., from left to right, and the copyist who prepared the block has copied it very crudely at that; so the inscription can be read with difficulty only with the help of a mirror. Different to the usual inscription of the year of mintage which is written in Arabic numerals, it is here inscribed in European figures as (1)080, and this corresponds to 1669–1670, that is, two years before ʿAbdu'llāh's death and more than twenty years after the occupation of Pulicat by Mīr Jumlā in 1646.

Dr. Joshi is not correct when he says that the *maḥmūdī* was a Persian coin; it was in fact a coin which was struck in Gujarat but had found its way to the Quṭbshāhī dominions, where 14,000 *maḥmūdīs* were equal in value to 5,985 Mughal *rupees*; see W. H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, London, 1923, p. 55, und W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1622–23, p. 86. Also see A. Master, *Note on Gujarat Maḥmūdī*, J. A. S. B., Num. Sup., No. 24, for 1914, pp. 462–468, where *maḥmūdī* is equated with 12 pence, while a *rupee* is equated with 27 pence. A *kōrī*, which was evidently another name for *maḥmūdī*, fluctuated from 10.8 pence to 13 pence. The writer refers to the Mir'at-i-Aḥmadī which says that the *maḥmūdīs* were struck at Nawanagar as late as 1170/1756 in the name of Sulṭān Muẓaffar, although Gujarat had changed hands several times since his reign. In 1756 *maḥmūdīs* weighed $4^1/_2$ *māshas*.

Among some fine specimens of Quṭbshāhī coins in the cabinet of Mr. Hormuz Kaūs of Ḥaidarābād are four specimens of Pulicat *fānams* with the following inscriptions:

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pagoda in terms of *fānams* and *rupees* changed from place to place; thus for instance the *pagoda* or *hon* was worth 15 *fānams* at Pulicat, and even 32 *fānams* at Madras[6].

It was during the reign of ʿAbdu'llāh that Tavernier, Bernier and Thèvenot came to the Deccan and wrote their memoirs regarding the conditions of life in the Quṭbshāhī dominions. We have again a mass of information regarding the coinage, weights and measures, prices etc. contained in the letters exchanged between the Dutch and the English factors on the Golkonḍā coast and their principals in Europe. Tavernier was in the Deccan in 1638–39, again in 1651 and lastly in 1657, while Bernier was at Haidarābād in 1666, and Thèvenot was in the Deccan about the same time[7]. These three eminent Frenchmen were preceded during the reign of ʿAbdu'llāh's father Sulṭān Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh by William Methwold, Schoerer and others whose writings have a bearing on the economic life of the Quṭbshāh dominions in ʿAbdu'llāh's reign[8].

Schoerer was appointed a junior factor at Masulipaṭam about 1609 and was there at least till July, 1614. In his time Fort St. David was already the site of an English factory, Negapaṭam was Portuguese, while the Dutch had their factory at Pulicat. Negapaṭam had its own currency, the unit of which was the *pardao* equal to two Dutch *guilders* and ten *fānams* in value, while a *fānam* fetched 20 or 25 cash. The Pulicat *pagoda* fetched 15 *fānams* and this was more or less similar to the value at Negapaṭam. At Peṭapoli or Niẓāmpaṭam a *pagoda* was of 16 *fānams*, a *fānam* of 8 or 9 *nevels*, a *nevel* of 4 or 5 *tār* cash, which was the smallest coin current in the locality[9].

Methwold, who was at Masulipaṭam from 1618 to 1622, does not give the details of the coins current in the kingdom, but gives the useful information that a *pagoda* was equal to a French crown or seven shillings and six pence of English money. In the same way the anonymous writer whose 'Relations' have been included by Moreland in his collection[10] says that a Spanish *real* fetched 10 or 11 *fānams*. He also gives the *pagoda* table as

1 *pagoda* = 15 *fānams* = 8 or 9 *nevels*[11].

It thus appears that while the *pagoda* or *hon* was the standard gold coin, even the

Obv. سلطان عبد الله

Rev.

The letter P on the reverse which stands for Pulicat is correctly struck on three specimens while it is struck with the head of the "P" turned to the left on one.

[6] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 93.

[7] See J. B. Tavernier, memoir of the author; F. Bernier, *Travels*, pp. xix–xxi; S. N. Sen, *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. xvii.

[8] These three have been included in W. H. Moreland, *Relations of Golconda*, op. cit.

[9] Ibid., p. 52, pp. 54–55.

[10] Ibid., p. 13.

[11] Ibid., p. 85.

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value of the smaller gold coin the *fānam*, which was about 6 grains in weight, fluctuated from place to place, and was thus more or less a token coin. Apart from this, the *pagoda*, which weighed about 5$\frac{5}{}$ grains, was struck by the Dutch at Pulicat, the Danes at Tranquebar and the ʿĀdilshāhīs at Bījāpur. As has been mentioned the Dutch minted the coins under a license from the Quṭbshāhī king and the English were also issuing coin perhaps to a limited extent. But the English, who always envied the Dutch for their success in commercial undertakings and were often at war with them in Europe, wanted to mint coin on the sly and thus to defeat them in the Indian market. There is a very significant passage in the letter from the Masulipaṭam factors dated January 7, 1667 in which it is suggested that "could most of the gold the company intended for these parts be coined into new *pagodas* in England, of the same goodness and stamp as those at the Fort and brought ashore undiscovered it would advance the prices"[12]. This is a very strange proposal and shows the depth to which the English could stoop in order to gain material advantage vis-à-vis the Dutch.

The rather simple calculation of the *pagoda* and the subsidiary coins was complicated by the minting of what came to be called new *pagodas*[13]. While Thèvenot, who was at Ḥaidarābād in 1666, says that the old *pagodas* fetched Rs. 5$\frac{1}{2}$ or 6 French *livres*, the new *pagodas* could ordinarily be had for Rs. 4 or at the outside for 6 French *livres*[14]. The value of the old *pagodas* went up gradually till it reached its peak at 170 new *pagodas* for 100 old ones in 1667[15]. Evidently the quality of gold in the new *pagodas* deteriorated, for Tavernier says that the variation in the value of the two *pagodas* was due to the comparatively low quality of the gold content of the new. He also remarks that "these *pagodas* were coined by the English pursuant to a license from the sulṭān"[16].

Apart from these native coins the Mughal *rupees* were also freely in circulation in the kingdom, while according to the *farmān* of Shāh Jahān and the "Deed of submission" of ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh of 1636, the Sulṭān was forced to coin his rupees with the Mughal legend embossed on them[17]. These *rupees* were divided

[12] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1665–67, p. 255. Governor Gyfford's memorandum regarding currency says that 128 ounces of gold were coined into 1161 *pagodas* instead of 1162 *pagodas* which the weight of the metal warranted. This works out to a little more than 9.077 seignorage per *pagoda* or about 8% of the metal. On page 319 a letter from Madepollam dated December 1, 1667, expressly states that the *fānam* "was only a denomination but no coin"!

[13] *English Factories*, 1665–67, p. 253.

[14] *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. 136.

[15] W. H. Moreland, op. cit., p. 93.

[16] W. Foster, op. cit., p. 255; J. B. Tavernier, op. cit., p. 336.

[17] The *inqiyādnāmah* or "Deed of Submission" under which ʿAbdu'llāh agreed to the Imperial name and legend being embossed on his rupees, which were to be struck not at Ḥaidarābād but at Golkonḍa, will be found in ʿAbdu'l-Ḥamīd Lahōri's *Bādshāhnāmas*, Calcutta, 1868, I, p. 145. The new coins were placed before Shāh Jahān on 20. 8. 1045/19. 1. 1636. On 1. 2. 1046/25. 10. 1636 the Sulṭān agreed to

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into half and quarter-*rupees*. A *rupee* fetched 55 *paise* or 40 *dam*. Thèvenot says that the *rupee* was like the *ʿabbāsī* of Persia one *tōla* in weight, and equalled 30 French *sous* or one shilling and six pence in English money. A *paisa* was as large as a *rupee* and was made of copper which was imported by the Dutch. There was also a "gold *rupee*" the value of which was 120 French *livres*, each French *livre* being equal to one shilling and sixpence [18].

Copper had been coined in the Quṭbshāhī dominions at least since the time of Ibrāhīm Quṭb Shāh and was continued during the reigns of his successors [19]. We have five distinct variations of the copper coins of the reign extant; viz.,

insert the formula prescribed by the Emperor in toto on his rupees; ibid., p. 177. Specimens of these coins are found in a number of museums and collections; for these see Whitehead, *Catalogue of Coins in the Panjab Museum*, Lahore, 1914, p. 200; N. Wright, *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta, Introduction, xiviii, pp. 111–112. The legend is as follows:

Obv. The Islamic Creed (Sunni version) ضرب کلکنده

Rev. شهاب الدین شاه جهان باد شاه غازی شیبقران ثانی

The Imperial title and formula was continued in the reign of ʿĀlamgīr, for which see Whitehead, op. cit., pp. 217–219; C. J. Brown, *Catalogue of Coins in the Provincial Museum*, II, Lucknow, 1920, p. 250. Shāh Jahān's Golkonḍa *rupee* has been discussed at length by Hodivala in his article. *The Gulkunda rupee of Shah Jahan*, J. A. S. B., New Series, vol. XII, 1917, Num. Sup., pp. 136–138, as well as by C. J. Brown, *Some Remarks on Mr. Hodivala's article on certain Mughal Coins*. J. A. S. B., New Series, vol. XIV, 1918, Num. Sup. The cabinet of Mr. Hormuz Kaūs has a number of coins struck at Golkonḍa with the Emperor's name and title. It has one coin of Shāh Jahān similar to the one cited above, as well a number of *rupees* of ʿĀlamgīr. Shāh Jahān's *rupee* has no date, but all ʿĀlamgīr's coins struck at Golkonḍa have dates inscribed on them. See also R. P. Jackson, *Dominions, Emblems and Coins of South Indian Dynasties*, B. N. J. IX, 1913, pp. 82–83.

[18] *Travels of Thèvenot* p. 25, Forty *dams* to a rupee; Lahori, op. cit., I, p. 205. W. H. Moreland, in his appendix to *Relations*, p. 91, says that as copper was expensive it was heavily alloyed and smaller coins were of lead.

[19] For the coins of ʿAbdu'llah's predecessors see H. K. Sherwani, *Culture and Administrative set-up under Ibrāhīm Quṭb Shāh*, Islamic Culture, Ḥaidarābad April, 1957, pp. 127–128; H. K. Sherwani, *The Foundation of Ḥaidarābād*, J. Pak. Hist. S., October, 1958, p. 242; H. K. Sherwani, *Political and Military aspects of the Reign of Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh*, J. I. H., December, 1961, p. 505; H. K. Sherwani, *The Reign of Sulṭān Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh*, J. Pak. Hist. S., April 1962, p. 138; Hormuz Kaūs, *Coins of the Quṭbshāhī Dynasty of Golconda*, Numismatic Circular, London, 1955; ʿAbdul Walī Khān, *Quṭb Shahi Coins in the Andhra Pradesh Museum*, Haidarābād, 1961. I am afraid the coins ascribed to the second and third ruler of the dynasty in the last mentioned publication do not seem to be genuine, but this naturally does not concern ʿAbdu'llāh's reign. Some specimens of the fifth variety of copper coins are found in the British Museum, and I am indebted to the Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals of the Museum for kindly sending me casts of the same. Seven specimens of the same are also found

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i) Obv. سلطان عبد الله قطب شاه
Rev. ضرب حيدر آباد
ii) Obv. سلطان عبد الله قطب شاه
Rev. ضرب محمد نگر
iii) Obv. سلطان عبد الله باد شاه غازی
Rev. ضرب دار السلطانه حيدر آباد
iv) Obv. / Rev. The same as (iii) with the emblem of the Shīʿite ʿalam on both sides.

and finally the rather pathetic and well known coin, the only dated copper of 1068/1657, with the king's title replaced by the epithet ختم بالخير و السعادة the first word of which may be read either as *khutima* meaning "sealed" or *khatama* meaning "ended", in either case foreboding the end of the dynasty[20]. The date is significant as it was a couple of years later than 1065/1655 when Ḥaidarābād was occupied by the Mughal army and the Sulṭān was forced to give his daughter in marriage to Prince Aurangzēb's son Muḥammad Sulṭān and declare him heir to the throne.

While there is no "*rupee* of gold" spoken of by Thèvenot in existence and there are only a few specimens of the silver *rupee* coined at Golkonḍa, there are hundreds of ʿAbdu'llāh's coppers distributed in different museums of the world. On the other hand the introduction of foreign coins in Quṭbshāhī dominions shows that the State was dependent on foreign currency to a very large extent, and the impression of the Imperial motto and seal on the Quṭbshāhī coins made Tilang-Andhra a virtual protectorate of Shāh Jahān.

Weights and measures

Compared to the coinage the weights and measures of the reign of ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh are simple, though even they vary from locality to locality in certain respects. As is well known the kingdom was the entrepôt for diamonds, and besides there being rich diamond mines in the Krishna Valley, Golkonḍa was the centre of the diamond trade. Diamonds were sold by the *mangelin*[21] which was

in the Koninklijk Kabinat van Munten, the Hague, Holland, and I am likewise obliged to the Curator for having sent me rubbings.

[20] Hormuz Kaūs, op. cit.; ʿAbdul Walī Khān, op. cit. Apart from the characteristic ختم it is interesting to note that the epithet *bādshāh* is used on ʿAbdu'llāh's coins, as up to then it was the title which was regarded more or less as the monopoly of the Mughal Emperor. The other peculiarity about these coins is the revival of the name Muḥammadnagar which had been given to Golkonḍa by the progenitor of the dynasty Sulṭān-Qulī Quṭbu 'l-Mulk and had then fallen into desuetude, as the coins of Muḥammad-Qulī amply demonstrate.

[21] Hind. *ghūmchi*, the partly red, coral-like seed found in pods of a shrub in the jungle near Ḥaidarābād.

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supposed to weigh 7 grains at Raoulkonda and $5^3/_5$ grains at certain other places, five *mangelins* being equal to 7 carats of diamonds. In certain parts of the kingdom they were also sold by the *rattī*, a weight which was roughly half the weight of a *mangelin*, i. e. $3^1/_2$ grains[22].

The unit of weight of other articles was the *seer*, but the *seer* was variable. At Surat in Western India 40 *seers* made a *man* but the *man* was 34 lbs which would make a *seer* $1^3/_{17}$ lbs only. The weight of a *man* seems to have varied from place to place, for during the reign of Sulṭān Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh it was $24^1/_2$ lbs at Pulicat, $27^1/_4$ lbs at Niẓāmpaṭam and 26 lbs at Masulipaṭam[23]. In the Portuguese settlement of Negapaṭam the *man* was 8 *viss* each $2^7/_8$ lbs, or equal to barely 23 lbs, while at Niẓāmpaṭam the *viss* was $3^1/_8$ lbs and the *man* 25 lbs. At Masulipaṭam the *man* had risen to $36^2/_3$ lbs[24]. Twenty *man* made a *candy* or *khandi*, which weighed 480 Dutch pounds at Negapaṭam and 500 lbs at Niẓāmpaṭam[25].

The measure of length for textiles was the *haste* or *cubit*, which was equal to $1^3/_7$ Dutch ells. Yards are also frequently mentioned in the transactions of the English, and presumably they were equal in length to the modern yard. The measure of distance was the *kōs* which works out roughly at 8 miles for 5 *kōs* but varies in different parts of India. The *kōs* in Tilang-Andhra was marked by *kōs-minārs*, cores of which, erected in the time of ʿAbdu'llāh, still flank the road connecting the capital with the east coast[26].

Products and manufactures

(i) Precious stones

Perhaps the most profitable industry of the region was the mining, refining and cutting of diamonds, a process which made Golkonḍa famous the world over. For this trade Raoulkonda may be taken as a model, although the mines there were situated in Bijāpur-Karnatak and not in the Quṭbshāhī kingdom. Tavernier says that the mines were discovered "about two hundred years ago" that is, about 1460. Round about the mines the ground was sandy, but in the rocks there were diamond veins and the miners had to strike the diamonds out and sift the pebbles and sand in sieves, leaving the diamonds behind. But in the process of striking the

[22] J. B. Tavernier, p. 336; *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. 136. *Rattīs* were used to weigh precious metals and jewels till very recently when the old weights were replaced by the metric weights; the table was 8 *rattīs*, 1 *māsha*; 12 *māshas*, 1 *tōla*; 5 *tōlas*, 1 *chhatāk*; 16 *chhataks*, 1 *seer*, 40 *seers*, 1 *man* or *maund*.

[23] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, appendix, p. 89; J. B. Tavernier, p. 311.

[24] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 52, p. 55; W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64, p. 113. It might be noted that till the introduction of the metric system the *man* of certain articles like sugar and grapes weighed only 12 *seers* or, roughly, 23 lbs.

[25] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 52, p. 55, p. 84.

[26] Methwold in W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, 8, says that 4 *kōs* equalled nine miles.

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rocks the diamonds, perhaps otherwise sound, became full of flaws. For giving lustre to the diamonds and cutting them steel machinery was employed. At Raoulkonda the contractors had to pay 2% of the value of the diamonds to the government by way of royalty, besides the tax on the permission to dig, which amounted to two *pagodas* per day if the number of workmen employed did not exceed fifty, but if they exceeded this number then the tax was raised to four *pagodas*. The actual miners' wages amounted to just 3 *pagodas* per annum which works out at about one *rupee* per month. This salary or wage was so meagre that the miners had recourse to theft of diamonds even to the extent of swallowing uncut diamonds or secreting them in the corners of their eyes. The price of diamonds was paid by bills of exchange on Agra or Golkonḍa, which were evidently the chief markets for the sale of precious stones in India[27].

Perhaps the largest mine within Quṭbshāhī dominions was at Kolūr on the Krishna, and this had been worked for a hundred years before Tavernier visited the locality. It was only by mere chance that these rich mines were first discovered by a peasant, who was digging his field to sow millet. While doing so he chanced to find a diamond weighing 25 carats. He took it to the capital where everyone was taken aback at the discovery, and the mining immediately began[28]. The mines were immediately let out to contractors at the rent of 3 *lakhs* of *pagodas* per annum for diamonds weighing 10 carats or less, while stones of more then 10 carats were to go to the king as a part of his royalty. The mines were sublet by original lessees to sub-lessees who were not too scrupulous, and they allowed the stones of more than 40 carats to escape the vigilance of the royal guards and find their way on to the black market[29].

When Methwold visited the mines they were worked by thirty thousand men including miners, porters and sifters, but this number had gone up to more than sixty thousand workmen when Tavernier visited them thirty years later. The diamonds which were mined at Kolūr exceeded all expectations and many of the stones weighed more than 40 carats. But Tavernier says that the stones were not clean, for the water of most of them was either black or red "according to the colour of the earth round about". Green diamonds were in great demand as, when cut and chiselled, they acquired a white colour. He speaks of a huge stone weighing 900 carats and says that it was this which Mīr Jumlā presented to Prince Aurangzēb when he crossed over to the Mughal camp[30].

It was to a large extent these mines which made Mīr Jumlā "the richest man in the kingdom"[31]. The Kolūr mines were within his jurisdiction, and he farmed them

[27] J. B. Tavernier, pp. 320–21. Raoulkonda, modern Ramelakotta, 18 miles west of Banganapalle in the Karnūl District, Andhra Pradesh.

[28] J. B. Tavernier, p. 328; on p. 330 he says that there were as many as 60,000 persons at work at these mines, "the men to dig, the women and children to carry the earth". Kollur in the Santanapalle Taluqa of the Guṇṭūr Dist. Andhra Pradesh, now a small village of no importance.

[29] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, pp. 30–31. [30] J. B. Tavernier, pp. 328–332.

[31] J. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, I, Calcutta, 1912, p. 218.

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in favour of some of his relations and friends, on condition that he kept for his own use "the largest and the most perfect of the diamonds", one of which he presented to the Emperor Shāh Jahān in 1657. This stone then weighed 756 English carats. Later it was ground and polished by the Venetian, Hortenso Borgio, after which its weight was reduced to 286 19/50 English carats. This stone was the famous Kūh-i-Nūr which travelled from Delhi to Persia, thence to Afghanistan and Lahore, and was finally delivered to Sir Henry Lawrence by Gulāb Singh on behalf of the boy Maharaja, Dulīp Singh, in February 1849, and now happens to be "the brightest jewel" in the crown of Queen Elizabeth II of England[32].

Tavernier says that the largest diamond he ever saw in a shop weighed $176\frac{1}{8}$ *mangelins* or $242\frac{5}{16}$ carats and cost 750,000 French *livres*. In the same way a ruby belonging to the king of Bijāpur was 14 *mangelins* or $17\frac{1}{2}$ carats in weight and cost him 14,200 *pagodas* or 74,500 French *livres*. He also mentions a diamond weighing 319 $\frac{1}{2}$ *rattīs* or $279\frac{9}{16}$ carats, but adds that when it was rough it weighed as much as 907 *rattīs* or 793 carats[33].

Besides diamonds the kingdom produced other precious and semi-precious stones like garnet, amethyst, topaz, agate etc.[34]. But pearls were imported from the Persian Gulf. There is an interesting episode with regard to the import of pearls which is worth mentioning. Tavernier says that he boarded a "great vessel" belonging to Golkonḍa from Gomron in Persia with cargo including a parcel of "long pearls" which were meant to have been sold to ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh. On reaching Masulipaṭam on July 2, 1652 he learnt that the king would not purchase anything till Mīr Jumlā had passed it. The Mīr was then besieging Gandikoṭa, the chief town of the Karnatak, and it was on September 1 that Tavernier reached the place which had been captured by Mīr Jumlā just a week earlier. It was a full fortnight before the minister allowed him to proceed to Golkonḍa, which he reached on October 2nd. Mīr Jumlā had promised to write to his son asking him to make arrangements to introduce the Frenchman to the palace. But Tavernier could not find the young man at all and it is quite possible that he might have had a signal from his father not to be concerned with the transaction. Anyhow, when the bag containing the pearls was at last sent to the king, he would not consent to pay the price demanded by Tavernier, and the party had to leave Ḥaidarābād for Surat sorely disappointed[35].

[32] F. Bernier, *Travels*, memorandum by the editor, at the end. It was the same Gulāb Singh who sided with the British in the grim struggle of the Sikhs against the British in the 1840's and who was allowed to purchase Kashmir for a crore of rupees and set up the Dogra dynasty there.

[33] J. B. Tavernier, p. 355, p. 358.

[34] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 7.

[35] J. B. Tavernier, pp. 199–235.

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(ii) Textiles

It has already been pointed out that Masulipaṭam was the chief port of the kingdom, while, with the advent of the Europeans Peṭapoli (Niẓāmpaṭam), Pulicat and Madras had also developed as major ports on the eastern coast. Not only was Masulipaṭam the chief port where ships from Europe and the Far East brought goods to the country and in exchange exported local produce, but it soon became the centre for textile manufacture[36]. In the north Srikakulum on the Orissa frontier was well known for the manufacture of muslin "which was as fine as that of Dacca"[37]. In the district of Rajahmundry some fine cloth was manufactured such as *betilles* or muslin, *salem pores* or stout *calico* and *percellas* which was the best *calico* on the market[38]. Masulipaṭam was also the centre of the *kalemando* industry which was the European name for the cloth painted with a *qalam* or fine pen, while cloth both printed and plain was manufactured at the Dutch factory at Pulicat. These, along with chintzes and *bāftas* or pure white *calico* which was prepared in the Mughal dominions, were in great demand in south-eastern Asia, and even in far-off Mozambique and Abyssinia[39]. There was so much demand for Indian made cloth by "the English, the Danes, and the Moores" that the Dutch complained of the tightness of the cloth trade in the 1630's[40]. This must have been a great loss to the Dutch, as Thèvenot said earlier in the century that they made considerable profit by the carriage and sale of chintz and other kinds of apparel. He also says that the chintz made at San Thome was "much finer and of better colour" than anywhere else in India[41]. The whole of the Coromandal Coast was in fact dotted by large and small towns where cloth was manufactured and allied trades such as the cultivation of the cotton plant, spinning, weaving and packing were regularly carried on.

Bernier enumerates carpet making as one of the major industries of India, and in the Quṭbshāhī dominions the centre of the industry was Warangal.

(iii) Other manufactures

Besides diamonds and textiles, which were the forte of the kingdom, we find that Indalwāi was the centre of the manufacture of swords, daggers and lances which found a market "all over the Indies" and were made from iron which was

[36] There is a very good article on *The Textile Industry and Trade of the Kingdom of Golkonda* by P. M. Joshi, in the Transactions of the Fifth (Hyderabad) Session of the Indian History Congress, 1941, pp. 609–617, in which the author has surveyed the whole field from the coming of the Europeans to the end of the Quṭbshāhī state.

[37] *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. 148. [38] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 80.

[39] T. B. Tavernier, pp. 301–302.

[40] *Dutch Diaries*, 1630–34, J. Bom. Hist. Soc., 1928, p. 185.

[41] *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. 111, p. 146. The editor, the late Dr. Sen, says in a note on p. 321 that Indalwāi stands for Indore of the *Ā'īn-i-Akbarī*. But this is not correct. Indalwāi is a small railway town 22 miles from Niẓāmābād, in Andhra Pradesh.

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mined in the Kālāghāt hills near the town. At Narsapur Peta "two or three leagues from Masulipaṭam", were large ship-building yards where "Muslims, gentoos and Portuguese" built their ships. Shipbuilding was possible in the locality because iron and other articles needed for the industry were found nearby, while the timber was brought from the inland forests by the river Krishna[42]. Evidently it was at these yards that large ships belonging to the kingdom which plied in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, were built. This was probably not to the liking of the English, for we have the record of a royal warrant of King Charles II of England, dated 21. 2. 1662, ordering that no one should "teach the natives to build and navigate ships in those parts to the great prejudice of the English nation, contrary to the royal charter granted to the said (East India) Company."[43] This shows how even at this early date the English authorities wanted to paralyse Indian industry by artificial means and thus to establish their hegemony first in the field of trade and commerce and then in the politics of the country.

(iv) Imports and balance of trade

Trade, of course, could not be carried on as a one-way traffic. There were many articles of which India in general and Tilang-Andhra in particular were greatly in need. India needed copper, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon and other articles like lead, tin, sulphur and camphor. Lead was imported to a large extent from England, broadcloth and other articles from France, horses from Uzbekistan, Arabia, Persia and Ethiopia, "fresh fruit such as melons, apples, pears and grapes" from Samarqand, and dried fruit from Bukhara and Persia. Moreover cowries imported from the Maldives, ambergris from the Maldives and Mozambique, rhinoceros horns and elephant tusks from Ethiopia, musk and porcelain from China and pearls from Bahrain and Tuticorin[44]. In addition to these important commodities cardamum and pepper were imported into the State from the southern part of the ʿĀdilshāhī dominions, ginger from the Mughal Empire and cloves and cinnamon from Ceylon. Cargoes of ships from the west consisted of such articles as quicksilver, broadcloth, vermilion, gold and silver ingots and iron ordnance as well as various articles of use which were meant to be presented to the high and the mighty[45].

Salt was widely made by means of the evaporation of sea water. The production of salt was a state monopoly, and when Sulṭān ʿAbdu'llāh transferred this monopoly to private enterprise the price of salt shot up "and was sold for the price of silver". The king's sister was married to the king of Bijāpur, and when she heard of the distress of the people she wrote to her brother that the monopoly of the

[42] W. H. Moreland, *Schoerer. Relations*, p. 63, p. 80.
[43] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64.
[44] F. Bernier, pp. 203–204. Broadcloth was a costly woollen cloth with a very large breadth, which was imported from abroad.
[45] J. B. Tavernier, p. 307; W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64, p. 169.

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intermediaries should be ended forthwith otherwise "he would be held up on the Day of Judgment". On the receipt of this letter the Sulṭān rescinded his orders causing the price of salt to come down to normal[46].

One of the main imports of the Quṭbshāhī state was saltpetre which was an important ingredient of gunpowder. With wars with the Mughals which went on almost without a break, saltpetre was in great demand. It was mainly a Bengal product, and the English factory depended on this Mughal province for its supply. There was some forward trading in it, but the "local traders, including those at Peṭapoli, were so much in debt that it was risky to give them any advances." The result was that saltpetre dropped almost entirely from the market, and in March, 1665 it could only be purchased "at a high price of Rs. 41½ per maund" at least. On the other hand the government of Sulṭān ʿAbdu'llāh was in need of the article, and an attempt was made by the English to obtain a monopoly of supplying it to the Quṭbshāhī government. But the transaction could not be entered into, for Ḥaidarābād demanded five hundred *pagodas* in cash as well as five hundred *candies* of saltpetre within two months. It appears that the English were not prepared to accept these terms and the project seems to have been dropped[47].

It is to be noted that in spite of such a large amount of imports from foreign countries and other parts of India the balance of trade remained in favour of the State, and the cost of imports did not exceed the value of exports. Bernier is perfectly clear on this point, and says that notwithstanding the importance of imported articles these transactions "did not occasion the export of gold and silver" from the country, for "the merchants who bring these take back the produce of the land". The very fact that gold and silver bullion were articles of continued import into Tilang-Andhra, and "precious metals abound in Hindustan although the country be destitute in mines" shows that when gold and silver were the legal tender, the balance of trade must have tilted in favour of the Quṭbshāhī dominions[48].

Price-levels

There was some contrast between the prices of the products of the country and those fetched by the articles imported from abroad. Schoerer gives a very useful table of prices which ruled the market just before ʿAbdu'llāh's reign, in 1610, as follows:

Rice 1 to 1½ *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. about 40 to 60 *seers* a *rupee*;
Wheat of a better quality, 3 to 4 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. about 20 *seers* a *rupee*;
Butter, 6 to 10 *fānams or* about 2 *rupees* per *maund*;

[46] Khāfī Khān, *Muntakhabu 'l-Lubāb*, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1925, p. 406.

[47] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1665–67, p. 249, pp. 253–54. Market price of saltpetre, ibid., p. 6.

[48] F. Bernier, Letter to Colbert, *Travels*, p. 204.

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Ox, 1 to 2 *pagodas*, i. e. about Rs. 4 1/2 to Rs. 5;
Goat, 1 to 2 *fānams*, i. e. about 5 or 10 *annas*;
Fowl, 1 *pagoda*, i. e. about 4 1/2 *rupees* per 60 or 80;
Spotted deer from 2 to 3 *fānams* to 1/2 *pagoda*, i. e. 50 to 75 *naye paise* to Rs. 2.50.

Imported articles were more expensive. Thus –
Pepper, 25 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. Rs. 125 for about 240 *seers*.
Nutmegs, 30 to 60 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. Rs. 135 to 270 for about 270 *seers*.
Cloves, 5 1/2 to 10 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. Rs. 25 to 45 for about 270 *seers*.
Sandlewood, 100–120 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. 450 to 520 for about 270 *seers*.
Lead, 17 to 20 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. Rs. 77 to 90 for about 270 *seers*.
Tin, 75 to 80 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. 335–360 for about 270 *seers*.
Alum, 12 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. 54 for about 270 *seers*.
Sulphur, 20 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. 90 for about 270 *seers*.
Quicksilver, 20 to 25 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. 100 to 112 per *maund*.
Camphor, 4 to 20 *pagodas* per *bahār* i. e. 18 to 90 per *seer*.
Musk, 10 to 12 *pagodas* per *bahār*, i. e. 45 to 54 per *seer*.
Raw China silk cost 40 to 45 *pagodas* or about Rs. 180 to 202 per *maund*, while twisted China silk cost one *pagoda* or about Rs. 4 1/2 per *seer*. In any case the *maund* for textiles was of about 12 *seers*[49].

Methwold has not got such rich details in his market statistics but says that when he was in the Quṭbshāhī dominions eight hens cost 12 pence, a goat or sheep cost 10 pence, while "a very good hog" could be got for 1 1/2 or 2 shillings. When he visited Kolūr mines he found that iron and steel were sold at 2 shillings to 3 shillings per cwt[50].

Tavernier came to the Deccan a number of times between 1638 to 1662. He gives us the price of saffron, myrrh and sugar-candy (by which he probably means crystal sugar) as follows: –
Sugar, 4 *maḥmūdīs* or about Rs. 14. 64 per *maund* of 17 *seers*.
Myrrh, 30 *maḥmūdīs* or about Rs. 87. 20 per *maund* of 17 *seers*.
Sugar-candy, 18 *maḥmūdīs* or about Rs. 43. 92 per *maund* of 17 *seers*[51].

[49] W. H. Moreland, *Schoerer*, pp. 62–63. It is interesting to note the prices of market commodities at the Aurangābād market towards the close of the reign of Shāh Jahān, mentioned in Ādāb-i-ʿĀlamgīrī, quoted by J. Sarkar in his *History of Aurangzeb*, I, p. 194:
Wheat and pulses . . . . . 2 1/2 *maunds* a *rupee*.
Jowar and bajra . . . . . 3 1/2 *maunds* a *rupee*.
Molasses . . . . . 1/2 a *maund* a *rupee*.
Yellow oil (ghee) . . . . . 4 *seers a rupee*.
Mīr ʿĀlam, *Ḥadīqatu ʾl-ʿĀlam*, I, Hyderabad, n. d., lithographed, p. 326, mentions the great famine of 1040/1630, when rice which used to be sold at 12 *maunds* a *hon*, was sold at the enhanced rate of only 7 *maunds* per *hon* which works out to about 60 *seers* per *rupee*.
[50] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 8, p. 34.
[51] J. B. Tavernier, p. 312. For *maḥmūdīs*, see note 5, above.

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In addition to the memoirs left by these travellers we have the correspondence of the factors and agents of the East India Company which throws a considerable light on the market prices. It appears that after the taking over of San Thome by Mīr Jumlā in 1646 the prices of commodities in the neighbourhood shot up to nearly 300 per cent. In all probability this increase was due to higgling about the taxes which were to be levied by the governor of the Karnaṭak and the British factors. However that may be, it is reported that, perhaps compared to the prices in England at the time, food was cheap, but "drinks" were expensive, and a quart or a *seer* of beer cost as much as 8 pence, which does not seem unduly immoderate today[52]. The factors complain that the tightness of the market was such that the broadcloth brought by the ship, the "Constantinople Merchant", remained unsold, there was no demand for quicksilver, and coral was offered only at the cost price current in Madras[53]. The offer for gold was 56 *pagodas* or about Rs. 225 per *seer* of 9 ounces or 256 $^1/_2$ grams. There was also an artificial rise in prices due to governmental demand for old *pagodas*. We have an interesting letter from the agent at Maddapollam to the Company dated December, 1667, in which the writer says the value of the old *pagodas* had increased by 70 percent, with the result that while the exchange value of the old *pagodas* was 4 $^1/_2$ *rupees* they now fetched 5 *rupees*. Thus there were two scales of prices for every article, one in the old and the other in the new *pagodas*. "Thus the weavers must keep up the price of cloth or else they cannot pay rent and taxes (in old *pagodas*). . . . But surely this cannot last long, for as investments will be less in these parts so money will be scarce and will they not be able to find enough to pay the king in rent"[54].

Taxes

While some of the Quṭbshāhī officials are said to be rapacious according to European travellers and the system of farming the revenue may have led to a considerable amount of hardship, it is noticeable that the duties levied on imports and exports were comparatively low[55], and there was considerable relaxation in favour of certain European companies. Of these the Dutch were perhaps the most favoured nation not merely because of their widespread trade which included the whole of the East India Archipelago, but also because they were the sworn enemies of the Portuguese who were known for their callousness and their fiery zeal in proselytising. Latterly there had been some misunderstanding between the Quṭbshāhī authorities and the Dutch officials but that had now been made up. The English, who were often at war with the Dutch in Europe, were a close competitor for the favours of the Ḥaidarābād government.

[52] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64, p. 387.
[53] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1665–67, p. 255.
[54] Ibid., p. 328.
[55] *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. iv. Thèvenot says that the customs duties were not so high but the search was strict.

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During the reign of Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh the ships entering and leaving the port of Negapaṭam paid only 2% ad valorem duties on entry and the same amount on exit, while at the Dutch-controlled port of Pulicat they had to pay this amount in addition to 15 *pagodas* per ship as anchorage dues. At Niẓāmpaṭam, which was governed by a "Hindu governor of Golkonḍa who had farmed it" the amount charged was 3½ % ad valorem duty on arrival and the same on departure, besides the tax called *chāpā dallālī* or stamping and brokerage which amounted to 1%. These taxes were levied from foreign merchants only, and the Muslim and Hindu ("Moores and Gentus") could trade freely although even they had to make some "presents" to the Governor.

The great advantage which the Dutch had over other European nations was that they had a permanent representative at the Quṭbshāhī capital, and while he was exerting his influence on the Court officials he was at the same time reporting matters to his company which made them aware of the situation at Ḥaidarābād. The Dutch director of coastal factories, Berchem, had made an agreement with the king that the Dutch company would pay 3,000 *pagodas* as a lump sum annually covering all import and export taxes, and would thus be able to trade freely. The only amount which they had to disburse was in the form of "presents" to the governor, harbour-master and other port officers[56].

The British were not to be driven to the wall by the Dutch. They had been able to get what is called the Golden Farmān from ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh in 1636 which was in some ways similar to the concessions which had been granted to the Dutch. Under this Farmān the English were to carry on trade within the Quṭbshāhī dominions duty free on payment of a lump sum of 800 *pagodas*, which was a sum equivalent to the amount allowed as compensation to the farmers of the tolls at Masulipaṭam; in case the duties chargeable to the English exceeded this amount they were to pay extra[57].

When Muḥammad Saʿīd became Mīr Jumla and the lord of Karnaṭak he began to enforce these conditions with strictness. When Sri Ranga was still the titular ruler of the Karnaṭak, the English agent Thomas Ivie had secured from him the concession under which the territory and government of "the village of Madras" were handed over to the company and they had complete freedom to deal with their wares duty free; and they were further granted half of all the customs and duties recovered at the port[58]. The year after this concession was granted Mīr Jumlā occupied Madras and confirmed the privileges. Muḥammad Saʿīd was an astute statesman, soldier and financier, and in order to supervise the customs revenue fully he set up his own offices at Madras, San Thome and Mylapur with

[56] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 52, p. 55, p. 64. Berchem was the Dutch director of coastal factories from 1612 to 1615.

[57] J. N. Sarkar, *The Life of Mīr Jumlā*, Calcutta, 1951, p. 51. For the Golden Farmān, see W. H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 70, W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1634–36, p. 14.

[58] Srinivasachari, *History of the City of Madras*, Madras, 1939, pp. 34–35; J. Bom. Hist. Soc., 1928; excerpts from the Dutch Diaries of 1631–34, p. 188.

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adigārs (adhikārīs) at their head. One of these *adigārs* was Malappa who was the officer in charge at Madras from 1648 to 1654. He constantly attended the *choultry* to see that his master's share in the customs revenue was duly credited, and at the same time he tried to increase the consumption of such articles as betel leaf, herbs etc. in order to increase the amount of customs. It is reported that "two Brahman brothers" assisted the Nawāb's officers so much that Englishmen could hardly "peep out of the town either to carry out or bring in anything, for they were sure to be invaded by *jainkaneers* or customs officers who demanded . . . sometimes three, four, five or more *fānams* upon a *pagoda*"[59].

It was in January 1656 that Muḥammad Saʿīd Mīr Jumlā went over to the Mughal Court, and his place was soon taken by Riḍā-Qulī, entitled Nēknām Khān, one of whose objectives in dealing with the English Company was to ensure that correct and honest accounts of export and imports should be made. This led to a considerable rift between the Quṭbshāhī officials and the British which took shape in some petty squabbles such as the question whether the governor's servants should be served first at the grass market or the company's servants. Sir Edward Winter, the Company's Agent at Madras, was actually caught riding through the town and given a good beating on 12th October, 1662. Naturally such a state of tension could not lead to any understanding between the two parties, and Winter suspected that the "Moores" would cut off all the privileges of the company. By an agreement of 1648 the Quṭbshāhī officials had agreed to accept 380 *pagodas* annually as half the total amount of customs duties collected; but in 1662 they refused to accept such a small sum as the trade of Madras had increased considerably. The Quṭbshāhī share was left to fall in arrears till 1672 when the English had to agree to pay 1000 *pagodas* for the last eleven years and 1,200 *pagodas* as annual payment for the future[60].

But the Quṭbshāhī hold on the customs revenue became more exacting and we find Winter complaining to Oxendon at Surat in a letter dated 2nd April, 1663, that the governor of Masulipaṭam was pressing the English further and was proposing to establish a *banksaal* or custom-house of his own to collect all customs there, and then perhaps to hand over half the amount to the company. The officials had realised that the English were making considerable underhand profit and were paying only a small portion of the proceeds to the royal officials. As Winter said in one of his letters "either by fair means or foul we may bring things to a better pass or bid farewell to trade to East India"[61].

With Nēknām Khān's alertness and the consequent loss of the company's revenue, the finances of the company became so low that it had to borrow 9,000 *reals*-of-eight from the none-too-honest Winter himself for day to day expenses, as

[59] J. N. Sarkar, *The English in Madras and Mīr Jumlā*, J. I. H., August 1941, pp. 144 sqq.; W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1651–54, pp. 234–36.

[60] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64, pp. 176, 180; H. D. Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, I, 1913, p. 343.

[61] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64; quotation from p. 180.

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well as for payment of the royal dues. As the Madras factors wrote to Bantam on 16th December, 1663, the governor was in fact threatening the very existence of the English in Madras with an army forty thousand strong, and was demanding that a Quṭbshāhī official should have his residence within Fort St. George itself, and that a custom-house should be established where the exact amount of the customs duties should be accounted for out of which a moiety should be handed over to the English. Thus the collection of customs duties was to be undertaken by the royal officials instead of by the Company. The trade of Madras had further increased by leaps and bounds and Nēknām Khān naturally wanted every *fānam* and every *dam* to be accounted for. The location of the governorate within the walls of the fort meant his insistence on the sovereignty of the Sulṭān as well as the need for the supervision of the import-export revenue. The English would not, however, countenance the existence of a royal governor within the fort, though, as a letter says, they would allow, of course under duress, the division of the actual customs into two equal halves[62].

Nēknām Khān thus made a great impression on the English factors, and early in 1665 he is called "the greatest of all forces and the greatest in power". But the Company was not agreeable or was unable to meet his demands, and it was decided "to close all the factories on the coast except Masulipaṭam"[63]. It was no doubt one of the consequences of the strained relations between him and the English that a virtual boycott of English trade was effected, and the customs revenue at Madras dwindled from about 2,000 *pagodas* per annum to a mere one *pagoda* a day, and English goods became practically unsalable[64].

As mentioned above, the Dutch were in a comparatively better position. They relied on a royal *farmān* of 27th November, 1636, which had been brought to Masulipaṭam with great pomp and ceremony, while they were careful to give "a decent present to the governor to satisfy his immense avarice". It was addressed by ʿAbdu'llāh Quṭb Shāh "to the Captain of the Dutch at Masulipaṭam", and directed that in case the Dutch had any complaint to make it should be brought before the *shāhbandar* or *sarṣanʿat* for disposal, and in case they experienced any kind of violence they should submit a petition to the king in person[65]. Another royal *farmān* was received by Anthonius van Dannen, Viceroy of the Dutch, at the request of his ambassador (at the court), Joan van Twist, in which the king hoped that the Dutch would drive the Portuguese from India and capture Goa, after

[62] Ibid., p. 278.

[63] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1665–67, p. 118.

[64] Ibid., pp. 132–133.

[65] J. Bom. Hist. Soc., 1928, pp. 190–191. For *shāhbandar* or the chief port officer see H. K. Sherwani, *The Reign of Sulṭān Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh*, J. Pak. Hist. S., April, 1962, p. 299. *Sarṣanʿat* is the distortion of *sar ṣanʿat* who seems to have been the director of industries in the port towns. As an instance of the previous treatment of the Dutch at the hands of the Quṭbshāhī officers see *English Factories*, 1622–23, p. 316, quoting Hague *Transcripts*, series (i) vol. VI, No. 216. The situation seems to have been considerably improved.

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which they would receive "half of the tribute and also a place where they like to establish themselves"[66].

Besides the duties on import and export which, after all, did not come to a large amount, and the taxes on diamonds, the Quṭbshāhī treasury relied on land revenue and *pēshkash*. According to the theory that all land belonged to the king, the land revenue was "farmed" or auctioned to the highest bidder, and there was a whole ladder of "sub-farming", from those who purchased the right down to the actual tiller of the soil. Primarily whole districts were farmed, so naturally it was only the wealthy who were the highest bidders. They in their turn divided their fiefs into smaller units and put the right of assessment to auction to what may be called middlemen, and these further auctioned their right to petty capitalist villagers. These middlemen and villagers were mostly non-Muslims. Each of these "farmers" was at liberty to squeeze his subtenant up to a certain extent, and so long as the tenant-in-chief paid his dues to the royal treasury, or if there was no visible discontent among the actual tillers of the soil, there was not much chance of interference from the centre. Two things must however be borne in mind in this connection: first the right to collect rent was not hereditary, and secondly there were no rights attached to any "farmer" except that of the collection of rent from the immediate sub-tenant. There was, in fact, a whole scale of royal civil and military officers interspersed in *sūbahs* or provinces, *sarkārs* or districts, and *parganās* or subdivisions. Moreover the forts were royal property and the *qal'adārs* and governors were appointed directly by the king[67].

The income from land formed the major source of royal revenue. These dues were paid mostly in cash but sometimes in kind as well; thus the district of Koṇḍāvīdu was farmed for 40,000 *pagodas* as well as salt, cloth and the dye called cheryroot, while the district of Masulipaṭam was farmed for 180,000 *pagodas*[68]. The total revenue from regular sources in the previous reign amounted to 17 *lakhs* to 20 *lakhs* of *pagodas*[69].

[66] Compared to the English the Dutch were in an advantageous position as they had a permanent envoy at Ḥaidarābād while the English had no such envoy and so had to send a special representative for each transaction. It seems that this system of transferring half the share of a certain head of revenue was a pointer to the later Marathas who demanded a fourth of all the taxes collected in the Mughal territories of South India.

[67] Farming of taxes was the rule in most of the European countries during the period that is being scanned. In France, which was the leader of all that was best in seventeenth century Europe, it was the capitalist who was the highest bidder for the provincial land taxes, and "he in turn farmed out the right to raise small sums to subordinate vassals of his own . . . Each farmer and sub-farmer wrung what he could out of the unfortunate peasantry, and was protected by a government which had already received all that was due of the tax." Wakeman, *Ascendency of France 1598–1715*, London, 1897, p. 19. Of course such a comparison does not mitigate the abuse of the system, and there was a vast contrast between the wealth of the court and big grandees and the poverty in the life of the people.

[68] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, pp. 79, 81. [69] Ibid., pp. 10, 77.

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Apart from these regular sources there was a continuous flow of what the Europeans called "presents" but which were a kind of *pēshkash* or *nadhrāna* to the king or his entourage, and took the form of cash as well as kind. A very curious term for some of the articles presented to the king coined by the European, especially English, merchants, is "toys", which included such odds and ends as large-sized mirrors, cut glass drinking vessels and tumblers, brass cannon, pedigree dogs and mastiffs. Presents were showered on the king and his entourage for the purpose of obtaining a favour: thus the English Company made a present of 6,000 *pagodas* for obtaining the Golden Farmān, while presents from the Dutch company for obtaining their wide privileges came to the same amount besides elephants, horses and copper candelabra which weighed nearly 5 cwt. Such presents were given to territorial lords as well, for we have the instance of the Nāyak who demanded and received costly velvet, damask and taffeta as well as cannon for admitting the English into the port of Armagon[70]. These presents may be taken to mean a kind of tax for favours received and work allowed. But it was not merely the presents but the method of presentation which was also important. Thus a letter of February 6, 1661, says that the presents meant for the king must be made by the principal servants of the coastal factories and should be attended by a large train of followers with proper music and pomp[71].

Other sources of revenue were tobacco and salt, and every one who entered a town was questioned and searched for these articles by royal officers. This octroi tax brought a considerable amount to the treasury. Another source of income was what may be called *ābkārī* tax on *tāṛi*, the fermented juice of the date palm, which abounds in Tilang-Andhra, and as this liquor was widely used it also helped to replenish the treasury[72].

It was these varied heads of revenue which made the court of Ḥaidarābād one of the richest in India. Although *lakhs* of *rupees* and *maunds* of diamonds and other precious jewels had to be carted to the Mughal treasury it was able to help the sister court of Bijāpur with money in its efforts to withstand the onslaught of the Mughals.

Salaries and wages

The salaries of high officials, both civil and military, were disbursed by the grant of *jāgīrs* or fiefs, the *jāgīrdār* being responsible for his quota of fully equipped soldiers for the service of the king. But this was not the universal rule, for we find that the king allowed the governor of Masulipaṭam a sum of 8,000 *pagodas* per annum, while the governor of Nīẓāmpaṭam was paid 5,000 *pagodas* per annum.

[70] W. H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 71; mastiffs; W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1668–69, p. 54.

[71] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1661–64, p. 54.

[72] J. B. Tavernier, p. 125, p. 128.

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Moreover the harbour-master, the *imām* of the central mosque, and other officers of Masulipaṭam were also paid in cash. We also find that subordinate servants were paid in kind, i. e. in the shape of rice, salt and grain, no doubt over and above cash payment. Thus while the *jāgīrdārī* system was in vogue in general, at least some of the officers of the coastal towns were paid in cash and thus the evils of the system were mitigated[73].

The wages of the workmen and private servants were commensurate with the current market prices. Blacksmiths and goldsmiths were paid the equivalent of three pence per day, private servants a penny per day, and the highest pay which foreign merchants allowed to their private servants was the equivalent of about five shillings per month without any extra allowance for food, and the same was the scale of pay of palanquin bearers[74].

It is interesting to find that the salary of an English factor of Fort St. George in 1668–69 ranged between £ 25 and £ 35 per annum and that of a writer was £10 per annum. Apprentices fresh from England were paid just £ 5 per annum as allowance for clothes, but "care was taken for their good education and usage". Two clergymen attached to the Fort were paid the comparatively high salary of £ 50 per annum.[75]

[73] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 81. For the early development of the *jāgīrdārī* system in medieval Deccan see H. K. Sherwani, *Māhmūd Gāwān, the Great Bahmanī Wazīr*, Allahabad, 1942. pp. 159–160; H. K. Sherwani, *The Bahmanīs of the Deccan, an Objective Study*, Haidarabad, 1953. pp. 322 sqq.

[74] W. H. Moreland, *Relations*, p. 27.

[75] W. Foster, *English Factories*, 1668–69, p. 127. What a contrast there was between the plain living of the English factors and the life led by a grandee like Mīr Jumlā who is said to have had twenty maunds of diamonds in his treasury; *Travels of Thèvenot*, p. 144. Even the governors of Masulipaṭam and Niẓāmpaṭam went about with their entourage of horsemen and umbrella bearers.

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Lacunae in he Study of Medieval Indian History

Mohibbul Hasan

The study of medieval Indian history is still in its infancy and so the question of lacunae requires a detailed discussion. But, due to lack of space here, I will have to confine myself to general remarks. I will also restrict myself only to the gaps in connection with the history of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughals. Moreover, since the problem of lacunae is discussed almost every year in the annual sessions of the Indian History Congress, I shall try not to repeat what has been said before, but will raise only those issues which have not yet drawn the attention of historians.

The study of this period was begun about a hundred years ago by English scholars. That it is still in its infancy is because it has been labouring from the very beginning under serious disabilities. The men who initiated these studies were, for the most part, intellectually of a low calibre, and being mostly officials they gave a political and administrative slant to their investigations. Furthermore, they were either ignorant of the revolutionary changes that were taking place in European historiography under German influence in the XIX century, or they deliberately put on blinkers, owing to reasons which will be pointed out later, so as not to see these developments.

The Indians began their study of the medieval period seriously in the early part of the present century, but for many years they remained under the cramping influences of the Anglo-Indian historians, and therefore failed to imbibe the healthier traditions set up by scholars like Niebuhr, Ranke, Acton and by the Manchester school. It was only in the twenties that some of them like Tara Chand[1], Habib[2], Tripathi[3] and Ashraf[4] broke away from the old influences and opened up new fields of investigation. As a result, from the later twenties onwards, valuable works

[1] Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam in Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1936. The book was written in 1922, but published much later. Tara Chand adopted a nationalist point of view. His thesis was that Islam's role in India was not barren but fruitful and healthy.

[2] Muhammad Habib, *Sultān Mahmūd of Ghaznin*, Bombay, 1927. Professor Habib tried to show that it was not religious zeal but desire for plunder which was the motive force behind Mahmud's invasions of India.

[3] R. P. Tripathi, *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, Allahabad, 1936.

[4] K. M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1935. Ashraf was the first Indian historian to attempt to write a social history of medieval India. He wrote from a Marxian point of view.

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began to be produced, covering various aspects of Turco-Afghan and Mughal history. Unfortunately however medieval historical studies, which were proceeding on correct lines, have been recently threatened by two serious dangers. The first is due to a rapid decline in the study of Persian in our schools and colleges. Since Persian is a basic language without which no research work in medieval Indian history is possible, the ranks of the historians of this period, never too large, have grown considerably thinner in recent years. The second danger springs from a lack of sympathy and understanding on the part of some our historians who are trying to dismiss this period as of no consequence, being something foreign and outside the main current of Indian history[5].

In addition to these factors the nature of the extant source material has also been responsible for the lacunae in the study of this period. For example, until recently very little attempt was made to deal with the social and economic conditions of medieval India; the emphasis was mostly on the political history. This is because it is comparatively easier to narrate political events, for the chronicles are there to be drawn upon, than to write a social and economic history for which there is a great paucity of material. No work exists for our period like the Doomsday Book which has enabled British historians like Vinogradoff, Maitland, Tait and Haskins to produce brilliant works on the social and economic history of medieval England. Our chronicles, unfortunately, are hardly concerned with the social and economic problems, while the Ṣūfī accounts consist merely of stories of miracles performed by the saints and their disciples. Almost all the archival wealth of the period before Shāhjāhān has perished. It is true that Abū-l-Faḍl's *Ā'īn-i-Akbarī* throws considerable light on the social and economic conditions of medieval India, specially under Akbar, but this is no substitute for original records[6].

One of the most important aspects of medieval Indian history that has been practically neglected is medieval historiography. This does not imply mainly the review of sources, for this is done in the introduction or appendix to almost every monograph on medieval India. What is really required is a study of the medieval conception of history and of the social, religious and cultural background of the chroniclers. Such a study will go a long way towards a better understanding of the problems of the medieval period[7].

History in medieval times, both in India and in the countries of the Middle East, was not regarded as an independent discipline, but was tied to the apron strings

[5] Such ideas are held by the revivalist school of Hindu historians. See the volumes edited by R. C. Majumdar in the *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Series*.

[6] Scholars have now begun taking an interest in economic history. Recently a work on the revenue history of the Mughals has been published (Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Bombay, 1963).

[7] Recently two works have been published dealing with medieval historiography: (i) P. Hardy, *Historians of Medieval India*, London, 1960; (ii) *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. C. H. Philips, London, 1961, pp. 115–39. But neither of these works concerns itself with the problems raised here.

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of theology. It was sometimes a subject in the elementary schools, but it never formed part of the syllabi of higher studies, though it was studied for general educational requirements, and held a special place in the education of princes. Since "it was considered no science at all or just tolerated among the lower ranks of scholarly disciplines", the chroniclers blindly accepted the evidence which they received without caring to sift it before using it[8]. This is evident from a study of the works of Firishta[9], Niẓām-ud-dīn[10], ʿAbd-ul-Baqī[11] and many others. Moreover, our chroniclers are not analytical. They never care to analyse the causes and results of events, for they believe that everything is determined by the Will of God. Social, economic and political factors have no meaning for them; everything is explained in terms of religion. This feature is common to all the chroniclers, but it is specially pronounced in the works of Minhāj Sirāj[12], Baranī[13], Badā'ūnī[14] and ʿAbd-ul-Ḥaqq. These writers were theologians and championed the cause of orthodoxy. As a result, if any ruler did not act up to the principles of the *Sharīʿa*, they turned against him and painted him in the darkest of colours. But if he came up to their expectations as to what a Muslim ruler should be, they eulogized him in hyperbolic language in order to make him an example to other rulers. This is the explanation of Baranī's exaggerated disparagement of the administrative policies of Muḥammad ibn Tughluq; of the inflated accounts by Badā'ūnī about Akbar's hostile attitude towards Islam; and of the excessive glorification of Maḥmūd Ghaznī and Fīrōz Shāh Tughluq by Minhāj Sirāj and Baranī.

Another lacuna which exists is the lack of critical editions of important source materials; and unless this gap is filled it will be impossible to write a comprehensible history of this period. Persian manuscripts are scattered in various libraries of India, Pakistan and Europe. A critical edition of at least some of the more

[8] For a detailed discussion of the subject, see Rosenthal, *History of Medieval Historiography*, Leiden, 1952, pp. 26–48.

[9] M. Qāsim Hindū-Shāh Astarābādī known as Firishta was a contemporary of Akbar and Jahāngīr. He is the author of the well-known chronicle named *Ta'rīkh-i-Firishta*, ed. Briggs and K. Ali, Bombay (and Poona), 1831–32.

[10] Niẓām-ud-dīn (d. 1594) held the post of Bakhshī under Akbar. He is the author of the *Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, which is a general history of India, 3 vols., ed. H. Husain, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1927–35.

[11] ʿAbd-ul-Baqī Nihāwandī (1570–1619) was the author of the Ma'āthir-i-Raḥīmī, ed. H. Husain, Bib. Ind., 3 vols., Calcutta, 1910–31.

[12] Minhāj-ud-dīn ʿUthmān (b. 1193) held the post of Qāḍī under the Sultans of Delhi. He is author of the *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī*, ed. Lees, Husain and A. Hadi, Calcutta, 1864.

[13] Ḍiyā'-ud-dīn Baranī (b. 1285) was a man of orthodox religious views. He is the author of *Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, ed. Sayyid Ahmad, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1960–62.

[14] ʿAbd-ul-Qādir Badā'ūnī (b. 1540) was one of the Imāms appointed by Akbar to lead the prayers in the Imperial capital on Wednesdays. He was learned but held extremely orthodox religious views. He was critical of Akbar's liberal policies. His well-known historical work is the *Muntakhab-ut-Tawārīkh*, ed. Lees, Ahmad and Ali, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864–69.

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important ones among these works would open up new fields of investigation and facilitate research by providing scholars with data on which to base their conclusions. The Asiatic Society of Bengal (now the Asiatic Society, Calcutta) has published a number of manuscripts and their translations thereby rendering great service to the study of medieval India. But this is only a drop in the ocean, for there is still considerable source material available in Persian which requires publication, for example, Rizqullāh's *Wāqiʿat-i-Mushtāqi*, Jauhar's *Tadhkirat-ul-Wāqiʿāt*, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir's *Ādāb-ul-ḥarb* and Hajī Dabīr's *Ẓafar-al-Wālihi*, not to speak of works in Arabic and various Indian languages and a large number of histories of the provincial dynasties and many documents throwing light on administrative practices.

It is, however, necessary to warn against the danger of publishing extracts from the original works. We all know the great harm which Elliot and Dowson's *History of India as Told by its own Historians* has done to historical research. Selections can never be a substitute for full texts, for they will always reflect the prejudices of their compilers. In a recent work called *Sources of Indian Tradition*, published in the U. S. A. (New York, 1958), while ample space has been given to selections from Baranī, Badā'ūnī and Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī[15], passages from Abū-l-Faḍl[16] and Dārā Shikōh[17] occupy but a small space, and Jaisī[18], Amir Khusrau[19] and ʿAbd-ur-Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān[20] do not find any place at all. Similarly, while Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī[21], a foreigner to Kashmir, having stayed

[15] Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī al-Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī (the Renovator of Islam at the beginning of the Second Muslim Millennium) was born at Sirhind in 1564. In 1599 he was initiated into the Naqshbandī order of mystics. Of extreme orthodox religious views, he was against both Hindus and Shiites.

[16] Abū-l-Faḍl (1551–1602) was a friend and councillor of Akbar. He held eclectic beliefs and exercised considerable influence on Akbar's religious views. He is the author of the *Akbar-Nāmāh* and the *Āʾīn-i-Akbarī* which are the most important sources for the reign of Akbar.

[17] Dārā Shikōh (1615–59) was the son of Emperor Shāh Jahān. A Ṣūfī of the Qādirī Order and a man of broad religious views, he was greatly influenced by the Vedantic philosophy and translated the *Upanishads* into Persian.

[18] Malik Muḥammad Jaisī was born at a village Jais, in Uttar Pradesh in the early part of the 16th century. He was a Ṣūfī and held liberal views. He was the author of a number of poetical works in Hindi of which the greatest is the epic called *Padmāvat*, ed. R. C. Shukl. 1956.

[9] Amīr Khusrau Dihlawī (b. 1253) is regarded as the greatest of India's Persian poets. He was also a great Hindi poet and a saint. (See for his life and ideas. M. Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau*, Bombay, 1930; and also Wahid Mirza, *The Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, Lahore, 1935).

[20] ʿAbd-ur-Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān (1556–1627) was the son of Bairam Khān, the prime minister of Akbar. He held high offices under Akbar and Jahāngīr. A man of liberal views, he was well-versed in Persian, Arabic, Turkish and Sanskrit, but above all he was a great Hindi poet.

[21] Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī was a contemporary of Tīmūr and visited Kashmir three

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there only for a few years, is quoted, Nūr-ud-dīn Rīshī[22], the patron saint of the Valley, is completely ignored. Evidently the selections have been made with the object of strengthening the revivalist trends among the Muslims, and providing an ideological basis for Pakistan.

The history of the military organization from the time of the Sultans of Delhi to the fall of the Mughal Empire is another topic that requires comprehensive study. The only study that had been hitherto made was Irvine's *Army of the Indian Mughals*. Recently however two works have appeared. One is called *The Military System in Medieval India* by Bahā-ud-dīn ʿAbd-ur-Raḥmān, and the other, which is a posthumous work of Jadu Nath Sarkar, is entitled *Military History of India*. ʿAbd-ur- Raḥmān's work, which is in Urdu, merely gives a factual account of the infantry, cavalry, dress, ranks and weapons of the medieval period, and does not try to describe the evolution of the military system. Sarkar's work is a short study of the development of the art of war by illustrations of important battles. What is required is not merely comprehensive study of the development of the art of war but also of the military organization. We have yet to study how much Akbar owed to his predecessors for his military organisation and how much was the result of his own creative genius. His *manṣabdārī* system is itself a subject for a separate monograph, because the works of Moreland and Abdul Aziz have left many questions unanswered. The causes of the gradual decline of the military system after Akbar are generally attributed to civil wars and to the inefficiency and corruption of the Mughal military administration which failed to enforce rules and regulations; to the red tape and delay in the execution of orders; and finally to the loss of mobility consequent upon the army being accompanied by huge baggage trains and by non-combatants who sometimes numbered ten times the fighting forces. But these are only partial explanations. Could it not be said that the military reforms of Akbar carried within themselves the seeds of decay? The military machine which he fashioned, for example, lacked flexibility and adaptability and was too cumbersome. These defects became evident when his forces came face to face with those of Malik ʿAmbar in the Deccan. It is also argued that Akbar's successors departed from the principles of his military policy. But it would actually be more correct to say that his successors tried to stick too closely to his principles and did not allow the military system to grow and develop according to the changed circumstances in regard to the mode of warfare, weapons and organization. This resulted in the loss of Quandahar, defeats in the Deccan and the final knock-out blow at the hands of Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī.

No scientific study of the religious movements under the Sultans of Delhi or the Mughuls has so far been made. Separate monographs on the leaders of the Bhakti movement or on the Ṣūfī saints have been written, but no one has as yet attempted to present an integrated picture of the religious life of this period. Moreover, there

times. See for his life, Mohibbul Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, Calcutta, 1958, pp. 55–58.

[22] See for Nūr-ud-dīn Rīshī, Mohibbul Hasan, op. cit. pp. 224 sqq.

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are certain religious movements whose study has not been taken up at all. Mention must be made here, in particular, of the Carmathian movement in India. This movement played a very important part in the history of medieval Islam. Bernard Lewis, Vatikiotis, and de Goeje have done valuable work on the Ismailites and Carmathians outside India, but no one has tried to study the social and religious significance of their ideas in this country, although they were extremely active in Sindh, the Punjab and parts of northern India from the IX–XIII century.

One other problem which has to be investigated is the character of the composite culture that was evolved during the medieval period and the causes why no complete synthesis took place. Tara Chand and Humāyūn Kabīr have done valuable work on some aspects of this question but it requires further inquiry and research. We know that Hindu yogis and Muslim saints mixed freely, though how much each influenced the other has not yet been dealt with thoroughly. We also know that over the centuries Hindus and Muslims were able to evolve a common music, a common language, a common art and architecture, and common customs, manners and forms of behaviour. In the villages particularly a real understanding took place between them. Members of both the communities lived there in mutual tolerance, speaking the same language, practising the same manners and customs, in some cases even the same religious rites, participating in each other's festivals and evolving a common music and common folk-songs. But the question that arises is why did this process not spread further and go deeper. The tragedy of medieval India was that while Hindus and Muslims met on the artistic, cultural and emotional planes there was no coming together on the intellectual plane. In Arabia, Persia, and Egypt Islamic philosophy and religious beliefs were greatly influenced by Hellenic thought.

Al-Fārābī's *The Good City* is based on Plato's Republic. His *Ra'īs* is no other than the Philosopher King of Plato, except that he has been islamicised[23]. Similarly Aristotelean ideas were integrated into the Shiite and Ismailite beliefs. The theory of Light and Emanation, for example, which is an article of faith with every Asna Ashari and Ismailite, is of neo-Platonic origin. It is true that by the XII century orthodoxy had driven the neo-Platonic ideas from its fold and had brought about the triumph of transcendentalism, but they found their refuge in the sects which assimilated them[24]. In India, however, no such phenomenon was witnessed. Here the influence of the sects was comparatively very little, and so Islam, dominated as it was by orthodoxy, refused to compromise with ideas it came into contact with. Theologians like Hajwarī, Baranī, Manarī, Badā'ūnī, Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī and Shāh Waliyyullāh played a very important part in waging a ruthless war to purge Islam of pantheistic and anthropomorphic ideas and in preventing Islam from coming closer to Hinduism. It is however important to point out that

[23] Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, Cambridge, 1962, pp. 122 sqq.

[24] De Lacy O'Leary, *Arabic Thought and its place in History*, London, 1954, p. 158; von Grunebaum, *Islam*, London, 1955, pp. 159–65.

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the '*Ulamā*' were not alone responsible for the failure of this rapprochment between Hinduism and Islam; the Hindu Pandit must equally share the blame. His arrogance, his social and intellectual aloofness, his feeling of self-importance and self-sufficiency and his vested interests, all prevented him from coming closer to Islamic ideas. These are only tentative suggestions which I have made. But we must investigate the question whether Islam and Hinduism are so antithetical to each other that they could not be reconciled, or whether some kind of integration was possible as took place in North Africa and Persia. The answer to this question has great relevance to some of the problems which face Indian society today.

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Plans for the Foundation of an East India Company in Brandenburg-Prussia in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century

Horst Krüger

Social-economic conditions

The Thirty Years' War brought to an end the period of economic, political and cultural decline and decay of the imperial central power which had persisted in Germany ever since the middle of the XVI century. During this period also the "second edition" (F. Engels) of the serfdom of the peasants in Germany began, thereby aggravating her economic and social backwardness as compared to the rising powers of Western Europe – the Netherlands, Great Britain and France. In these countries unified internal markets came into existence and a class of national bourgeoisie began to emerge. This development led to the formation of centralised monarchies. The predominant form of the state became absolutism.

In Germany the course of historical development took an opposite direction. At the beginning of the middle ages the towns were the centres of economic progress. But their development was hindered by the increasing power of the territorial princes. This is evident from the results of the Imperial Diet at Augsburg in 1555 which sealed the victory of the princes over the imperial central power. Henceforth the possibilities of development for the German towns were limited to a great extent by the nearly insurmountable frontiers of the territorial states. Moreover, since the revolutionary German peasants had been defeated by those same territorial princes during the great German Peasant War in 1524–1525, the urban middle-classes could no longer find a revolutionary mass basis in the countryside. In these circumstances the towns mostly came under the domination of the local sovereigns.

There were other unfavourable factors which were important in hastening the decline of Germany. As a result of the discovery of America and of the sea routes to India, trade routes shifted from Germany to the Atlantic seaboard. The import of large quantities of silver and gold especially from the newly discovered countries, particularly America, caused a revolution of prices which generally took an upward trend. The structure of prices was reversed so that industrial commodities rose more slowly then agricultural products.

The pernicious financial policy of the German princes, each of whom aimed at an active balance of trade and consequently hoarded money in his own country, led to the erection of customs frontiers which encouraged the economic disruption of Germany still further.

In the towns, the struggle between the different classes and sections became intensified, for the patricians tried to shift the burden onto the small masters belonging to the guilds and the plebeian strata of the population. It very often

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happened that during these internal struggles the sovereign intervened and reduced the towns to a state of complete dependency.

In the Eastern territories of Germany, such as East Holstein, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, Lausitz, Pomerania, Silesia and also Bohemia, the manor developed during this period. Contrary to the custom in the Western territories, the lord of the manor here was at the same time in control of the courts of justice. On his own demesne he was virtually the sovereign in miniature. This was where he pursued large-scale farming for the export of grain. The personal organisation of production resulted in making not the tribute from his subjects but their compulsory services the essential. The production of grain for the market was carried out on the estates belonging personally to the lord of the manor. He was eager, therefore, to enlarge his personal lands for grain-growing. This was the reason why the lords of the manor, or junkers, living eastward from the river Elbe, evicted the peasants from their holdings in large numbers, forcing them to work on the lands of their manorial lords. It is a very significant feature of the economic development in Germany in the course of the XVII and XVIII centuries, that the capitalistic period in the countryside was announced as the period of large scale farming on the basis of serf-labour.

The claims of the overlords on the peasants soon became a controversial matter between the rulers of the states and the nobility because the rulers were naturally interested in taxing the peasants as heavily as possible. This problem was solved to a certain extent in Brandenburg where the junkers took over the debts of their sovereign in 1653.

The main feature of political development in the German territorial states was the effort on the part of the princes to strengthen their own power. They acquired the right of jurisdiction and police authority, built up an administrative apparatus – especially a fiscal system – based on a professional civil service, and recruited an army of mercenaries. The sovereign was at the same time the supreme head of the national church.

The imperial central power on the contrary became progressively weaker. A bitter struggle for power arose among the ruling circles of the feudal nobility. Outwardly these sharp internal controversies were veiled by the princes' adherence to certain religious groupings.

In addition to these unfavourable internal conditions in Germany outside influences also operated. In the first place the endeavours of the more advanced nations – France, England and the Netherlands, to contest the Habsburgian claim to world domination must be noted.

The Thirty Years' War was waged against the background of these social-economic and political controversies, accelerating and completing the economic, political and cultural decline of Germany.

The victors in this long and cruel war were France and Sweden. Their aim was to weaken the imperial central power of Germany at all costs. France occupied German territories and towns in the West and Sweden occupied the estuaries in the North of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.

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The separate states of Germany acquired their sovereign independence; they were now competent to make alliances even with foreign states against the German Emperor. The Netherlands and Switzerland became finally autonomous. The whole legislative power was vested in the Imperial Diet. But its decisions had to be unanimous and this occurred only once in the course of 150 years.

The political provisions of the peace treaty of Westphalia were in themselves a catastrophe for Germany, but even more destructive were the direct results of the war. Commerce and industry were ruined. Agriculture had also suffered seriously. About 25% of the arable land in the northern regions of the country had not been cultivated for a period of about 40 years. The losses in human life were enormous. Nobody knows how many people died from epidemics, starvation and as a direct result of war. The population of Germany was reduced by about half.

To sum up we may say that the results of this development paralyzed the political activity of Germany for the next two hundred years.

The Electorate of Brandenburg also suffered heavy losses during the war. The country was laid waste and depopulated. In Berlin, the capital, there were only about 6000 inhabitants at the end of the war. Manufactured goods from England, France and the Netherlands flooded the country. German merchants became mere agents of foreign trading capital.

The Elector of Brandenburg acquired certain territories by the peace of Westphalia. The Brandenburg-Prussian state was now composed of three groups of provinces which differed very much in their economic and social structure.

In the western regions serfdom was less severe. Here the influences of the already capitalistic Netherlands had encouraged the development of free citizenship. The so-called middle provinces were situated in the centre. Here the feudal lords – the junkers – were the ruling class not only over the peasants on their estates, but also in public affairs, especially in the army. In the east there was the province of Prussia, which belonged to the Elector of Brandenburg, but was still a Polish fief. These provinces were spread over the northern regions, and the princes of Brandenburg tried to unite their scattered estates.

The true founder of the Brandenburg-Prussian state was the Elector Frederic William (1640–88). But he depended on a certain economic and social development, which was the basis of the rise of Brandenburg-Prussia.

The shifting of the trade routes from Italy and the south of Germany to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, in the course of the XVI century, was favourable to Brandenburg-Prussia. Since the middle of the XVII century some districts of the south and the centre of Germany had diverted their trade. Up to this time the merchants of these regions had traded mostly with Italy and Spain via France. Now they tried to gain access to the North Sea in the north of Germany. To reach the shores of the North Sea they made use of the German rivers which all flowed through the provinces of Brandenburg-Prussia.

This favourable geographical position gave the feudal junkers living east of the river Elbe, as already mentioned, the opportunity of utilizing the growing demand

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of the west European countries for grain and industrial raw materials, and of extending their estates based on the compulsory services of the peasants.

The alliance between the sovereign and the nobility, that is, the absolute monarchy, was based on their joint exploitation of the peasants. Most of the peasants had thrown off obedience to the feudal landlords during the Thirty Year's War. They opposed the efforts made by the junkers to force the villagers into an intensified bondage. However the necessary pressure could not be exercised on the rural masses by the declining central authority of the Emperor, but only by the powerful military and police apparatus of the local sovereign. The Elector allowed the junkers to enslave the peasants and the feudal landlords permitted him to collect taxes from the rural population. The nobility did not pay taxes at all. While the position of the peasants became worse and worse the rule of the junkers reached its culmination in the course of the XVII and yet more in the XVIII century.

The establishment of military absolutism in Brandenburg-Prussia was necessary to maintain the power of the feudal nobility. The weak middle-classes were allowed to develop only as far as it was necessary to establish and maintain the absolute monarchy. The weak development of the middle-classes and the feudal conditions obtaining both in the country and the towns did not permit of a normal economic development in Brandenburg-Prussia.

In 1644 the regular army was established and its maintenance was very expensive. Although the Elector had levied an excise on all goods passing through the gates of the towns and had forced the peasants to pay a heavy levy, he needed subsidies from foreign countries. This was one reason for the unscrupulous and perfidious foreign policy of the Elector Frederic William. Another reason may have been that he tried by every means possible to get possession of the province of Pomerania on the Baltic coast which was then occupied by Sweden. The aim of abolishing Prussia's vassalage to Poland should also be mentioned[1].

But was there no other method of solving the financial problems of the state quickly and radically? The West European nations, including even Denmark and Sweden, had started the more or less successful exploitation of the new countries which had recently been discovered. The fleets of their trading companies returned loaded with rich treasure and valuable goods from America and Asia. In particular the companies founded for trade with the East Indies – the British in 1600, the Dutch in 1602, the Danish in 1612, the Swedish in 1626, and later (1664) the French – occupy an important place in the process of the primary accumulation of capital.

In his youth the future Elector of Brandenburg, Frederic William, had already had the opportunity to become acquainted with the wealth and the abundance of goods imported to the Netherlands from the East Indies, Indonesia, China and Japan. While in the Netherlands he wrote to his father in August 1634, that he had

[1] G. Schilfert, *Deutschland von 1648–1789*. Lehrbuch der deutschen Geschichte (Beiträge), ed. by A. Meusel and R. F. Schmiedt, Berlin, 1959, p. 49.

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bought knife-handles made of agate and "Indian" riding stocks[2] from a merchant who had just arrived from the East Indies. In October 1635 he communicated that he had purchased a tame monkey and that he would send it to Berlin accompanied by an "East Indian" boy who had been brought to Amsterdam and who spoke Dutch[3]. But Frederic William was not interested only in the rarities from the distant East Indies but equally in the ship-building in the Netherlands. He reported, therefore, that besides Amsterdam and the Northern Netherlands he had also seen "beautiful towns by the sea . . . where big ships are built which will afterwards sail to the East Indies"[4].

East India Company

The example of the successful Dutch East India Company did not only help to form Frederic William's early conceptions but remained a deciding factor in his later plans and undertakings aimed at the establishment of a Brandenburgian East India Company. Frederic William, who later (1640) became the Elector of Brandenburg-Prussia, gained impressions and experiences in the Netherlands – the "head capitalistic nation of the 17th century" (K. Marx) – which he could never have had in the feudal, narrow and backward conditions of Brandenburg. The Dutch example could not fade with the passage of the years that followed because Frederic William, by marrying Luise Henriette, the eldest daughter of Prince Heinrich of Orange, established close relations with the Netherlands. Such impressions were not confined to the Elector but existed among other strata of the nobility[5].

At the end of the Thirty Years' War and during the peace negotiations at Münster and Osnabrück, the Elector of Brandenburg did his utmost to obtain the province of Pomerania on the Baltic in order to get access to the Baltic trade via the river Oder. The trade route for bulk articles, timber and grain (the only products worth mentioning which were exported from the manors to the more advanced West European manufacturing countries), went through the Baltic Sea. Yet this large-scale trade was not undertaken by the Germans, let alone the Brandenburgians, but by Danish, Swedish and above all, Dutch merchants. When, however, even before the conclusion of the peace, Frederic William lost his hope of gaining Pomerania, he set out to participate in international trade in a different way by utilizing his contacts with the Netherlands.

[2] Letter from Leyden of 20./30. 8. 1634: G. W. v. Raumer, *Friedrich Wilhelm des Großen, Kurfürsten von Brandenburg Jugendjahre*. Berlin, 1853 sq., p. 15.

[3] Letter from Arnehm of 7./17. 10. 1635: ibid., p. 48.

[4] Letter from Arnehm of 2. 8. 1635: ibid., p. 37.

[5] This applies for instance to the electoral counsellor Schlezer who, as the Elector's minister, was connected by marriage with the Netherlands: R. Schück, *Brandenburg-Preußens Kolonial-Politik unter dem Großen Kurfürsten und seinen Nachfolgern (1647–1721)*, vol. I, Leipzig, 1889, p. 52, footnote 8.

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At the beginning of 1647 the former Dutch Admiral, Aernoult Gijsels van Lier, made a proposal to the Elector to found an East India Company in Brandenburg. Gijsels had spent many years in the service of the Dutch East India Company mostly in the Moluccas and had furthered the interests of the Company by adopting the most brutal methods of exploiting the inhabitants. His reign of terror is described by the historian N. G. v. Kampen as follows: "The names of van Gysels, van Deutekom, Demmer and other commanders are branded in history; their tyranny grievously oppressed the unhappy islanders . . ."[6]. K. Marx also emphasized the bloodstained history of Dutch colonisation. He exposed it in the words of the Englishman Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles who called it "one of the most extraordinary relations of treachery, bribery, massacre, and meanness"[7]. Gijsels had left the Dutch East India Company apparently because his merits were not sufficiently recognized. When his plan of founding a second East India Company in the Netherlands with the assistance of Prince Heinrich of Orange failed, the latter introduced Gijsels to the Elector of Brandenburg[8].

In the course of the preliminary negotiations, Gijsels submitted an "Extract of a relation of the counsellors in India to their principals, the directors of the East India Company in the Netherlands, in the year 1637" which claimed to show where they were trading in India, what kind of goods were sent to India and came from there, or were traded on the spot, how much the Company had gained or lost in this year, the value of their assets or capital, and, in addition, where the English and Danes were trading and how far they had extended their control[9]. In this very interesting document of 62 pages there is a comprehensive survey of commercial and colonial activities from Persia to China[10] apparently written with the assistance of Gijsels who is mentioned there as "Counsellor in India and Governor of Amboina". In order to make it easier for the Elector to understand the terms

[6] „Die Namen van Gysels, van Deutekom, Demmer und anderer Befehlshaber sind in der Geschichte gebrandmarkt; schwer lastete ihre Tyrannei auf den unglücklichen Insulanern . . .": N. G. v. Kampen, *Geschichte der Niederlande*, vol. II, Hamburg, 1833, p. 104.

[7] K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Colonialism*, Moscow s. a., p. 259.

[8] E. Heyck, *Brandenburgisch-deütsche Kolonisationspläne. Aus den Papieren des Markgrafen Hermann v. Baden-Baden*, Zschr. f. d. Gesch. d. Oberrheins 41, Freiburg i. Br., 1887, pp. 134–135; R. Schück, op. cit., pp. 12 sq.

[9] "*Extract einer Relation der Räthe in Indien an ihre Principales die Directores der Ostindischen Compagnie in Niederland de A 1637. Worauss zu ersehen an was orten dieselbe in India trafficqiriren, Was für plätse sie daselbst besitzen, Was für Waaren nach Indies gehen, Was von dannen kommen, oder auch in Indien selbst verhandelt werden, Was die Compagnie an einem inderendern ort daßselbige jahr gewonnen oder verlohren. Auch wie hoch sich ihre effecten oder capital daselbst belauffe; imgleiches an was orten die Engelländer und Dannemärcker hanthieren, Und wie weit sich ihre macht daselbst erstrecke*": Deutsches Zentralarchiv Merseburg (subsequently DZAM), Rep. XI, 130, No. 2.

[10] This vast geographical region was called "India" or "The East Indies" in the language of XVII century.

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used in the manuscript, explanations have been added by Counsellor Schlezer in his own handwriting[11].

This report on the activities of the Dutch East India Company is informative and important from various points of view. It deserves far more attention than has been given to it by R. Schück in his publication both from the point of view of the study of the Brandenburgian plans and on account of its importance as an historical source of general interest[12].

The attractive prospect of the huge profits mentioned in the "Extract" must have been the deciding factor for the Elector of Brandenburg. For the year 1637, 2,362,930 Dutch guilders are mentioned as the overall profit[13]. Considering the chronic financial difficulties of the state of Brandenburg this large sum was well calculated to stimulate the Elector's spirit of enterprise.

But even larger sums are mentioned. For instance it is stated that the directors of the Company were considering transmitting home 10,000,000 guilders in 1639, although this would have reduced the "Indian funds" by 30 tons of gold[14]. Not only tons of gold are mentioned but also royal gifts received by the Company[15].

The final profits from single transactions also looked attractively high. The Dutch merchants hoped, for instance, to make a profit of 950,000 guilders at Surat from the sale of three cargoes worth 391,307 guilders[16]. Jewels from the Netherlands brought in a profit of 75% and more[17].

What kind of European goods in demand in "India" could be sold at a profit by the Company? Our source gives this information also. The commodities included goldleaf, amber, trumpets, rings, well-made armour for horsemen, paintings of famous battles and naval engagements, large globes, telescopes and rare English knives with amber handles[18]. This catalogue of goods makes it clear that the

[11] "*Djonke*" (Dschunke), for instance, is explained as: "a kind of Indian ship": ibid., fol. 4.

[12] R. Schück, op. cit., mentions the "Extract" only incidentally in a footnote: pp. 16–17, footnote 22.

[13] Schück, op. cit., p. 17, footnote 22, gives the net profits as only 182,000 guilders. Obviously relying on the data given on fol. 28 of the "Extract" he overlooked the further details given on fol. 29 which prove that "including the sums gained by the Company but which had not yet been entered in 1637" (original text: ". . . *die Posten so die Compagnie zwar gewonnen hatt aber Ao. 1637 noch nicht zu buch gebracht geweszen*") the "overall profit of the year 1637 was about 2. 362.930–16–4" Dutch guilders (original text: "*Beläufft sich also der ganze gewin des Jahres 1637 ungefehrlich auf 2.362.930–16–4*"). This estimate is also confirmed by the fact that for the region of the Coromandel Coast alone an annual profit of 377,233 guilders is mentioned in the source: DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 2, fol. 19.

[14] Ibid., fol. 29.

[15] For instance from the "King of Carnatica": ibid., fol. 16.

[16] Ibid., fol. 8.

[17] Ibid., fol. 7; in 1634 a diamond of 8 carat bought for 4000 guilders in Amsterdam was sold for 7200 guilders to the King of Siam: ibid.

[18] Ibid., fol. 6.

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Europeans were supplying primarily luxury articles for the feudal nobility in the Asian countries. There were not many goods produced in Europe at that time which were in demand in India. On the contrary, there was a great demand for the products of the highly skilled Indian artisans, such as cotton cloth and steel wares, in addition to natural products such as spices and saltpetre, which sold at high prices in Europe. The Europeans had quite often to pay for the goods bought in India in gold because they had nothing else to offer in exchange. This well-known fact is also confirmed in our document. Two Dutch ships which sailed to the Coromandel Coast in 1637 carried cargoes worth 214,456 guilders, of which 96,721 guilders were in gold[19].

As indicated in the title, the "Extract" also furnishes information about the fierce competition among the various European colonial powers in Asia. There was particularly acute tension between the Dutch Company and the Portuguese who had come earlier to the East Indies and were now being ousted by the Dutch. Typical for this situation is the remark in our source to the effect that the Dutch navy had received orders to prevent large vessels from entering the port of Goa, to seize and destroy the fleet sailing from Cambay, and to see that no ship bound for Portugal should put to sea[20].

The struggle with the British, who had not yet become major competitors, was apparently still waged on the level of commercial rivalry in 1637. A method very frequently adopted was for a merchant who wanted to buy, to pay more in order to corner Indian goods in short supply. The "Extract" gives a few examples of this kind. The English "President" of Surat, Wilhelm Metholt, for instance, brought Rs. 100,000, 1140 *man* of quicksilver and other goods to Ahmedabad. His intention was to stay there as long as was necessary to buy up all the available indigo so that the Dutch would not be able to purchase any. But the latter were not prepared to let the English have the indigo and paid a higher price, offering 34 to 35 rupies per *man*. In the opinion of the Dutch Company this procedure would still result in a larger profit than if they paid 50 rupies for a "*Mann chajon*" at Agra[21].

A similar fight developed regarding the saltpetre offered for sale at Ahmedabad. In this case the English tried to keep out Dutch competition by bidding one-half and even five-eighths of a rupie more per *man*. When this method proved unsuccessful the English merchants went direct to the places where the raw saltpetre was produced and bought it up on the spot. The Dutchmen were now forced to come to a compromise with the English in order to secure against cash payment at least one-third of the indigo bought up by the English[22].

The situation of the Company in Bengal was not very favourable at that time due to the fact that the Dutch had been expelled from one of their bases. The

[19] Ibid., fol. 3.

[20] "*Der Flotta nach Goa ordre ist gewesen zu verhindern, dass kein Capital fahrzeug hineinkäme, die Schiffs Cafilla von Cambaya zu intercipieren und zu destruiren, keine caracken oder andere Schiffe nach Portugal ausslassen*": ibid., fol. 13.

[21] Ibid., fol. 14.

[22] Ibid.

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Dutch Governor applied the tactics of prolonging the retreat until "the Moors" would despair of their departure. Moreover some ships were sent to the Bay of Bengal in order to keep out the Portuguese on the one hand, and on the other to "bring the Moors to their senses" or "to make them at least think about it". Apart from these measures the Directors deputed a merchant to the court of the Great Moghul in order to lodge a complaint about the treatment they had received in Bengal[23].

In connection with the remarks about trade and the exchange of goods we also find in the "Extract" file remarks of a more general historical interest[24]. But we may assume that the Elector of Brandenburg was interested more in the methods of exploitation applied to the peoples in these far-off countries by the Dutch, and not least by his new counsellor, van Gijsels. The Dutch took advantage of the feuds among the indigenous feudal lords and endeavoured to keep out their European competitors in order that their own trading activities might be undisturbed[25].

The Company did not shrink from waging a "vehement" war for some six to eight months against China[26], or from felling great plantations of clove trees in order to monopolize the most profitable trade in spices for themselves[27]. They even went so far as to contemplate the destruction of all "Nägelbäume" (clove trees) on a number of Indonesian islands and to drive out the local population[28].

This document, "Extract of a relation . . .", is an informative source for the history of the primary accumulation of capital, proving once again the statement

[23] Ibid., fol. 19.

[24] For instance about the coins which were current in different parts of India, fol. 15, or about an embassy from the Netherlands to the court of Golconda which was stopped (the reason is not mentioned) but the armour and "thick elk hides" ("*dicke Elendthäute*") arrived: fol. 6. – There is much news about other countries, especially Indonesia, because of the widespread commercial activities of the Dutch East India Company. To quote only one example, a remark on the development of the factory founded in the kingdom of Jacarta in 1610 is given here: "*Die Stadt Batavia nahm täglich an einwohnern von Chinesen Malayers, Bandanesen und auch Javanen zu, theilss wegen der freiheit die sie daselbst mehr all unter unsere Indianische Prinzen geniessen, theilss weil ihnen ihres glaubens halber kein Disputat gemacht wirdt, Sondern Sie dem Allmächtigen befohlen werden . . .*": fol. 22.

[25] The following remark is typical of this attitude. We quote the passage in full. "*Die Directoren in India preaferiren die vermehrung des Handels für die entdeckung neuer Länder, Waren sonst nicht abgeneigt gewesen, auss Tayonham etzliche Schiffe hinter oder ostwärts Japan auszuschicken.*

Die entdeckung des Suydlandes, und der Strasse Maba ist auch des wegen und auss mangel der Schiffe, wie auch wegen der troublen in Amboina hinterblieben.

Sie verhüten daselbst mit fleiss dass die Indianische Prinzen nicht zu gross werden, hetzen aber wieder die Portugiessen und Spanier an wan Sie konnen": fol. 7.

[26] Ibid., fol. 4.

[27] Ibid., fol. 9.

[28] Ibid.

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of K. Marx that capital was born "dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt"[29].

If the "Extract of a relation . . ." was calculated to increase the Elector's interest in the trade to the East Indies, the "Memorandum on the shipping to the East Indies, 1647" – probably submitted together with the "Extract" – showed what appeared to be a possible way to bring about the foundation of a Brandenburgian East India Company[30].

At the very beginning Gijsels enumerates, of course, the attractive advantages of such an undertaking[31] after emphasizing that every ruler has the same right as the Dutch, English, Portuguese and Danes to visit the countries of the Orient. He therefore gives once more a short list of the goods coming from the various countries in order to whet the Elector's appetite[32]. The most important article mentioned which could be exchanged, according to Gijsels to the "greatest advantage", is amber.

Religion is also brought in to inspire the pious Elector with enthusiasm for the plan. The "Extract" includes a report about the inhabitants of an island who allegedly wanted to become Christians but who "did not think much of the Portuguese priests" and would prefer to have Dutch ministers[33]. Gijsels logically follows up the idea, promising the Elector that he will be able to indicate places where colonies could be founded and the "pure, reformed religion" introduced[34]. The same motive – to serve the glory of God and the propagation of the Christian religion – can be found also in a Latin memorandum entitled "Nuda dispositio navigationis Indiae occidentalis"[35] by an unknown author, which was submitted by Canstein[36] in 1658 but was written most probably at the beginning of the fifties of the XVII century[37].

But the deciding factor is the assurance given here that an investment of a capital of 1 million Taler would bring a return of 3 million Taler within three years[38]. The port of Pillau in East Prussia is recommended as a suitable central

[29] *Capital*; vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 760.

[30] DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 3; published by Schück, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 1–8; vide also Schück, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 17–18.

[31] "*Bedenckungen Wass für Vortheilen Sr. Churf. Dl. zu Brandenburg in den Ost-Indien würden thun undt haben, auch Welchergestalt solches anzufangen, und aufs beste auss zu führen*": DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 3, fol. 1.

[32] Ibid.

[33] DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 2, fol. 17.

[34] Ibid., No. 3, fol. 1.

[35] Ibid., No. 6, fol. 1.

[36] R. v. Canstein was the President of the Berlin Amtskammer.

[37] Vide Schück, op. cit., p. 48, footnote 1.

[38] "*Diess gantze Werck wird mit ein Capital von eine Million angefangen werden, undt können inwendig drey Jahren selbige Schiffe mit Gottes Hülffe, behalten wiederkommen, und alssdan, in platz von Ein, Drey widergeben*": DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 3, fol. 1.

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market because here these costly wares could most profitably be sold to Germany, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, to Russia and to Lithuania[39].

In order to attract the proper personnel for the Company it is recommended that the Elector should guarantee certain privileges and freedom to exercise the reformed religion[40]. Many rich Dutchmen who were not allowed to become members of the Dutch Company would participate in Brandenburgian trade to the East Indies. In order not to provoke them through fear of competition from Pillau, the citizens of the East Prussian towns, Königsberg and Danzig, should also be invited to join the Company. Pillau, however, should become a "New Amsterdam". Gijsels further recommends the conclusion of a treaty with the King of Denmark to regulate customs on the Sound without mentioning the real motives[41].

The plan for the foundation of a Brandenburgian East India Company was drawn up, as already mentioned, with a view to the coming peace negotiations which were expected to bring Brandenburg the territorial gain of the Pomeranian province still occupied by the Swedes. By acquiring the port of Stettin, Brandenburg would have gained an exit to the open sea and would have been in a position to direct the grain trade through her own port[42]. The great importance of Stettin, as well as Pomerania, for the State of Brandenburg was further enhanced by the project of the East India Company, which could only be realized in association with a general development of maritime commerce and the construction of its own fleet. This is the reason for Gijsel's warnings that the Elector Frederic William should be on his guard against the Swedish crown, which was itself interested in the East Indies, and that he should do his utmost to secure the Pomeranian ports[43].

[39] ". . . *und dan hierdurch werden alle solche kostbahre Sachen undt Wahren in der Pillau viel wolfeiler alss in Hollandt, und von dannen in Teutschlandt, Pohlen, Böhmen, Ungarn, Mosscau, Russen, undt Littau konnen verschicket undt mit grossem Vortheil verhandelt werden*: ibid., fol. 2.

[40] This is a new and relatively early proof that the religious toleration of the rulers of Brandenburg had in the first instance economic causes. The memorandum states: "*so würde vor allem denselben alda frey exercitium der Reformirten Religion müssen gegönnet werden, durch welches mittel dan auch gewiss viele Kaufleuthe auss denn Niederlanden dorthin würden gezogen werden umb in diese Compagnie zu participiren, wodurch dan Sr. Churfl. Dl. Landen in grossen aufnehmen kommen würden, auch so dass dieser Brandenburgischer Compagnien actien vor, umbgang kaum dreyer Jahren, über die halbscheit so gut sein werden all die actien der Niederländischen Compagnie, welche jetzo Ein für Fünf verkauft werden*": ibid., fol. 1.

[41] Denmark controlled, as is well known, the entrance to the Baltic Sea and was therefore able to ruin all hopes of making a profit by demanding higher customs on Brandenburgian vessels entering and leaving the Sound.

[42] E. Herzfeld, *Klassenkämpfe in der Kur und Mark Brandenburg während der schwedisch-brandenburgischen Auseinandersetzungen des Jahres 1675*. (Nach kurbrandenburgischen Quellen). Phil. Diss., Berlin, 1961, pp. 14–15.

[43] DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 3, fol. 2. – Another Swedish East India Company was founded in 1731 but its trade was confined almost exclusively to China. In 1634, that

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Finally, it is recommended to buy 3 or 4 ships in the Netherlands surreptitiously, bring the supplies necessary for the first voyage secretly from France, Norway and Spitsbergen to Pillau, and from there to set out for the East Indies.

As a result the Elector, through the foundation of the East India Company and the newly founded colonies in India and Prussia, "will propagate God's church, increase his territory and population, improve his domains, customs and revenue and win immortal fame"[44].

The documents and plans submitted to the Elector filled him with enthusiasm. He made immediate arrangements for their realization. He persisted even when the hope of acquiring Pomerania and the estuaries had shortly afterwards to be abandoned[45]. A number of events and features in the subsequent negotiations, which were subject to frequent change due to general political developments[46], are of interest to us.

The negotiations between the representative of the Elector and the German Hanseatic towns of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck regarding their admission to and financial share in the projected Company, were generally speaking unsuccessful, but out of them emerged the possibility to buy the Danish colony in India which had been offered by the King of Denmark to the town of Hamburg.

The Elector was already informed as to the activities of the Danish East India Company through reading the "Extract of a relation" of 1637 submitted by Gijsels. For instance it was stated that the Danes trading on the Coromandel Coast had borrowed 3500 pagodas or 70,000 reals at 2, 2¼ and 2½ per cent interest per month and therefore had to pay back 47,250 Dutch guilders per year[47]. We

is to say during the Thirty Years' War, Sweden proposed to her allies in the Protestant Federation which also included Brandenburg, to undertake joint voyages with them to South India. The memorial of 1634 prepared for the Elector of Brandenburg, mentions among other matters that on account of her military expedition to Germany Sweden had not been able to realize her intention of establishing a great extensive trading company. The aim had been "*nicht allein die bissdahero übliche Commercien, Handlungen undt Nahrunge, insonderheit Seefahrten, conservieren, versterken und verbessern, sondern auch andere Neue Nutzbare Negociationes zu treffen* . . .". The memorial urged the participation of Brandenburg in the aims proposed by Sweden, pointing out the advantage given by the many navigable rivers passing through Brandenburgian territory and used for the above-mentioned carrying trade in addition to the Brandenburgian export of grain: DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 1, fol. 6, 7. – The rapidly changing political alignments during the Thirty Years' War and the rise of Sweden as a first-class European power, soon put an end to Swedish interest in assistance from Brandenburg and the other German states, when the plans of 1634 materialized.

[44] ". . . *Sr. Churfl. Dl. mit ihren neuen Colonien so in Indien alss Preussen, Gottes Kirche vermehren, Ihre Landt und Leuthe vergrössern, Ihre Domeinen, Zollen und Einkommen verbessern, undt darmit sich einen unsterblichen Ruhm machen werden*": DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 3, fol. 4.

[45] Schück, op. cit., p. 19. [46] Vide Schück, op. cit., pp. 19 sq.

[47] DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 2, fol. 16.

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may certainly draw conclusions regarding the not very favourable financial position of that Company and the willingness of the Danish crown to sell it. On the other hand references to the rich diamond fields in the kingdom of Golconda, and to the relations of the Danes to this Indian state, were calculated to keep alive the Elector's interest. Beyond the Coromandel Coast the Danes also traded at Masulipatam and in Bengal[48].

Direct negotiations took place between the Elector's representative, Schlezer, and the Danish king in the spring of 1651, regarding the Danish fort at Dansburg, or Tranquebar, situated on the Coromandel Coast. Yet apparently the actual value of this factory was not very great. Schlezer, of course, gave a very favourable report about the fort and the possibilities of cultivating pepper, but was firmly corrected by Gijsels[49]. A treaty was nevertheless concluded between Brandenburg and Denmark in 1651 which laid down that Tranquebar, with all its appurtenances, was to be handed over to Brandenburg against a payment of 120,000 Taler[50]. The fulfilment of the treaty, however, was frustrated by the inability of the Elector to raise the capital necessary for the foundation of the East India Company. The octroi regulations drafted by Gijsels provided a suitable legal basis for its foundation[51] but all attempts to persuade the towns to contribute financially were in vain. The aldermen of Königsberg in Prussia in particular declared their financial inability to participate on account of the decline of that town's economy[52]. The real reason for this refusal, however, lay in the fierce resistance on the part of the anti-absolutist circles of the Prussian nobility, together with the patricians of Königsberg, to the absolutist rule of the Elector of Brandenburg. The treaty between Brandenburg and Denmark had to be annulled in June 1653.

The first plan for the foundation of a Brandenburgian East India Company had failed just when a new proposal from an unknown author was submitted to the Elector. This is the memorandum in Latin mentioned above[53]. It had no practical

[48] "*Die Dennemärcker handeln auch in Masilipatnam und Bengale.*

Der Dennemärckische president in Masilipatnam soll persohnlich in der Demant mine gewesen sein, und etzliche stücke bekommen haben, welches den Niederländern verboten gewesen, die selbigen Jahres nicht mehr 335 1/8 manghly oder 461 Caratten in 326 Stück für 10611–11–4 [Gulden – H. K.] *bekommen können, Da Sie doch woll für 100000 G. begeret hetten, Welches daher gekommen, dass die Länder Errogonda Palim unfern von der mine gelegen verwüstet gewessen und der König zu Golconda verboten gehabt die Diamanten zu graben, damit dieselbe desto höher köndten gesteygert werden*": ibid., fol. 16–17.

[49] Schück, op. cit., pp. 35–36.

[50] Ibid., p. 38.

[51] The octroi regulations as printed by Schück, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 23–32. The file DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 13, also contains Gijsels' first draft of the octroi regulations. Vide also Schück, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 39–40.

[52] Schück, op. cit., pp. 42–43.

[53] See p. 132; Schück, ibid., p. 48, footnote 1.

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result but it draws our attention to an interesting historical problem. It is emphasized in this memorandum that the times were favourable for the proposed enterprise because the Netherlands and Portugal were at war (in the colonies), while England was hampered by internal civil wars[54].

What was merely a theoretical consideration in the memorandum became a living issue when the representative of the exiled heir to the English throne – later Charles II – in return for the Elector using his influence with the secular and ecclesiastical members of the German Diet to induce them to grant a considerable sum of money for the war against Oliver Cromwell, the leader of the revolution in England, gave a written promise for the future that Brandenburg would be admitted as a member of the British East India Company according to the number of ships brought in or the capital investment in cash, and that a treaty on trade and navigation would be concluded[55]. Thus the feudal junkers in Brandenburg, who, in comparison with the changed social and political conditions in England as a result of the bourgeois revolution, were extremely reactionary, tried to obtain a share in the exploitation of Asiatic peoples by allying themselves with the outlived forces of the past. This was naturally a miscalculation; Charles II never invited the Elector of Brandenburg to become a member of the British East India Company and in fact would have been powerless to do so[56].

In the meantime many-sided negotiations for the foundation of an East India Company were undertaken, this time in alliance with Austria and Spain. But these efforts proved equally unsuccessful[57].

Writing in 1662 the aged Gijsels resignedly remarked that Germany was excluded while all the other nations were storming and conquering the oriental world. This was a fact that would be regretted later[58].

[54] "*Tempus non incommodum, primum pp bellum Statuum Hollandorum cum Lusitano, si ille Navigatione non vult concedere. non pt et multum impedire: item pp bellum intertinum Anglorum nec illi multum obstabunt etc.*": DZAM, Rep. XI, 130, No. 6, fol. 2.

[55] Schück, op. cit., pp. 49–50.

[56] Ibid., pp. 74–75.

[57] Ibid., pp. 55–75. – The benefits anticipated on that occasion, as indicated in the report of the Margrave Hermann of Baden-Baden of 19. 8. 1661 under the heading "*Emolumenta communia und particularia*", allow us to draw detailed conclusions regarding the depressed economic situation in Germany after the Thirty Years' War and the rôle of colonial trade and colonial expansion in the economic development of the European countries. According to the backward social conditions which became evident especially in the weakness of the middle classes and in the particular disunion in Germany, the intention was not that the merchants should become share-holders in the enterprises but the princes: ibid., pp. 67, 71–72.

[58] "*In summa, die orientalische Welt wird durch alle Nationen bestürmt und incorporiert, ohne durch's Reich; durch eure Lauterfantereien lasset ihr es übel liegen, welche Irresolutie ihr nachmals noch beklaget werdet!*": E. Heyck, op. cit., p. 192. – But the idea of an East India Company came up again and again in Brandenburg. It

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In a publication of the year 1784 it is rightly observed that the trading companies founded or aimed at by the Elector Frederic William of Brandenburg could not materialize "because they did not originate out of their own inner strength but from the mere inclination of their founder"[59]. The small economically and socially backward feudal state of Brandenburg was not in a position to compete with the rising national states of Western Europe, even when the ruler, under the influence of individuals from the capitalist Netherlands, tried to utilize their proposals in the interests of the feudal class of the junkers.

Oriental studies

The abortive efforts to establish an East India Company, however, exercised a positive influence on the rise of the first scientific studies in the languages and cultures of Asiatic peoples in Berlin and Brandenburg. The Elector's interest in the distant and fabulously rich countries of Asia, Africa and even South America; the coming together in Berlin of men who were interested in the matter partly on account of their personal acquaintance with these regions but in any case out of their belief in the economic advantage of trade relations with those countries; and finally the reports of the successful operations of the West European Companies and accounts coming from the missionaries who accompanied the merchants, created the conditions in Berlin for the emergence of a small circle interested in those countries in an academic sense[60].

reappeared for instance in connection with the foundation of the Africa Company in 1682: Schück, op. cit., p. 159. Finally the well-known French traveller, Jean Baptiste Tavernier was actually invited to come to Berlin in 1684. The Elector gave him the title of *Kammerjunker* (10. 7. 1684) and Counsellor of the Admiralty. Although he was already seventy the intention was to send him as an ambassador of the Elector of Brandenburg to the court of Aurangzeb in order to establish trade relations and, if possible, to found a Brandenburgian colony in India. But this plan, which envisaged the participation of English merchants and interlopers (i. e. individual non-company traders), also came to nothing: Schück, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 184–190, vol. II, pp. 225–227.

[59] *Von der Neigung des Churfürsten Friedrich Wilhelm für die ausländische Litteratur in Verbindung mit dem ausländischen Handel, Hausens Historisches Portefeuille*, Wien, Breslau, Leipzig, Berlin, Hamburg, 1784, 7. Stück, pp. 1–24.

[60] This development, typical in Europe for the XVII century, is described at the end of the XVIII century in the report in the following terms, which certainly do not in any way restrict the scope of the new "Orientology" to a narrow conception of philology: "*Dieser heilige Mönchseifer, welcher durch den erwachten Handlungsgeist dieses Jahrhunderts nach dem Maße des aus dem Verkehr mit den heidnischen Nationen zu hoffenden Vorteils, unterstützt ward, hatte für Europa die wichtige Folge, daß man darinne nach und nach mit der Sprache und zugleich mit der Geographie, Geschichte, Sitten und Gebräuchen der neuentdeckten Länder bekannter ward*": ibid., pp. 5–6.

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First we should note Andreas Müller, the Provost at Cölln[61], who studied oriental languages[62]. He was the son of a well-to-do farmer near Stettin in Pomerania, born in 1630 (?). He studied at the Universities of Rostock, Greifswald and Wittenberg. Shortly after 1653, being then a Provost at Treptow, the young clergyman left for England. Here he worked with Edmund Castell, Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, and Bryan Walton, Bishop of Chester. aiding them in their joint enterprise of a universal dictionary. Müller lived in Castell's house and both scholars concentrated on the comparative study of near eastern languages which included Hebrew, Chaldean, Syrian, Samaritan, Arabic, Ethiopic and Persian. But for their 'better understanding' Armenian, Turkish, Indian and even Japanese proverbs were added.

The long stay in England during the period of revolution and restoration as well as the intimate contact with leading scholars of England and Western Europe not only increased Müller's qualifications as an orientologist but also undoubtedly broadened his general outlook. A. Müller's intellectual attitude and sincere devotion to his work is reflected in the following incident. Charles II entered the city of London on 29th May, 1660, and was enthusiastically welcomed by the populace. The majestic, festive procession passed Castell's house and Müller only had to go to the window in order to witness this rare spectacle and to look at the new ruler of England. Yet Müller was so engrossed in his studies that he did not even go to the window but continued poring over his books.[63]

Andreas Müller returned to Germany after Castell's house had been destroyed by the fire of London in 1666. In 1667 he became Provost at Cölln. He could now devote considerable time to his oriental studies utilizing the rich collection of books and manuscripts on oriental subjects in the possession of the Elector. Frederic William not only bought the oriental library of Admiral Aernoult Gijsels van Lier[64] but he also ordered the purchase of Persian manuscripts, and arranged, with Müller's assistance, for the acquisition of the oriental manuscripts, which included some Ethiopian and Coptic texts, left by the teacher of oriental languages at Königsberg, Theodor Peträus. The German physician A. Cleyer, who was in the

[61] Cölln was the sister town of Berlin and was united with the latter only in 1709.

[62] There are a number of accounts of the life and work of Andreas Müller. The first biography was written by S. G. Starke as an appendix to Starke's edition of Müller's *Alphabeta ac Notae diversarum lingarum* (1703). This account has formed the basis for all subsequent studies of Müller's life and works. Of these should be noted: Aug. Müller, *Eröffnungsrede*, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (ZDMG), Leipzig, 1881, pp. III–XVI; C. Stichler, *Zwei altberlinische Chinakundige und Orientalisten zur Zeit des Großen Kurfürsten, Der Bär*, Illustrierte Wochenschrift für vaterländische Geschichte . . ., Jg. XXII, Berlin, 1896, pp. 150–154, 163–165, 173–175; Donald F. Lach, *The Chinese studies of Andreas Müller*, Journal of the American Oriental Society, ed. by W. N. Brown, vol. 60, New Haven, 1940, pp. 564–575.

[63] C. Stichler, loc. cit., p. 164.

[64] Donald F. Lach, loc. cit., p. 565.

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services of the Dutch East India Company, was ordered by the Elector to buy "East Indian" and especially Chinese books. These books and manuscripts were collected in the Electoral Library in Berlin founded in 1660, where scholars were allowed to use them[65].

It is said that Provost Müller collected the "alphabets" of 66 languages and made a hundred different translations of the Lord's Prayer[66]. He also edited the *Travels* of Marco Polo from a Latin manuscript in the Electoral Library[67] with his own notes, and published translations of other works on the East. But he was mainly interested in Chinese. He boasted that he had invented a *Key* which would make it easy to learn this language so "that even women, by studying Chinese characters for a year or even a shorter period of time, will be able to read Chinese and Japanese books . . ."[68].

This *Key to Chinese* would have been of the greatest importance to merchants and missionaries. Müller realized this and tried to sell the *Key* at a high prize. Perhaps he thought of the experiences of Castell in the debtor's prison at London when he demanded two thousand thalers before he would agree to publication. The Elector who himself, together with his wife, often heard Müller lecture on his researches, donated one thousand thalers to him in 1678. Yet Müller refused to reveal his secret[69].

The news about his invention spread very far. Even G. W. Leibniz, the famous philosopher and scholar, became very much interested in the *Key to Chinese*. Leibniz was *au courant* with Müller's studies, for Johann Sigismund Elsholz, physician to the Elector, had sent most of Müller's works to him[70]. But when Leibniz enquired in a series of fourteen questions about the *Key* and its possibilities Müller's answers were evidently unsatisfactory to Leibniz[71].

Andreas Müller published many works on Chinese language, history and culture[72]. He even had wooden type made for Chinese characters in order to be able to publish Chinese texts in the original language together with translations. He also produced a "geographical nomenclature" and maps for the whole of China.

But it was these very Chinese studies that brought about his ultimate downfall. Already in 1668, soon after his return from London, Andreas Müller was in the centre of the syncretistic controversy. His sympathy with the followers of

[65] *Von der Neigung* . . ., loc. cit., pp. 6–7.
[66] Ibid., p. 8.
[67] Published under the title: *Marci Pauli Veneti, Historici fidelisimi juxta ac praestantisimi, de Regionibus Orientalibus* . . .
[68] Andreas Mülleri, *De Monumento Sinico Commentarius Novensilis in Apuscula nonulla Orientalia*, Francofurti ad Oderam, 1695, p. 12.
[69] Donald F. Lach, loc. cit., p. 567.
[70] Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften (eds), G. W. Leibniz, Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe, 1. Reihe, 2. Bd., Darmstadt, 1927, pp. 419–420.
[71] Ibid., pp. 491–492, 499, 508.
[72] A complete bibliography of Müller's published and manuscript works still existing in 1881 may be found in Aug. Müller, loc. cit., pp. XIII–XVI.

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Georg Calixtus at Helmstedt who placed works above faith and who were in opposition both to pure Lutheranism and to pure Calvinism, focused the hatred of the orthodox on his person[73]. In 1678 Müller was attacked by an orthodox scholar at Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, Elias Grebnitz, who called the Chinese language a product of the devil. According to him no sooner were the name of God to be used in this picture-writing than a sin would be committed against the second commandment. He accused Müller "who was about to release the full horror of this sinful language in the *Key to Chinese*"[74].

When the Great Elector came to know of these accusations he did not protect Müller who had hitherto enjoyed Electoral favour for many years. As a staunch defender of the Reformed Church he showed no tolerance towards the unorthodox. In 1685 Andreas Müller was dismissed and accused of heresy. For his further publications against rigid Reformed orthodoxy, Müller was even thrown into jail[75]. The general spiritual and religious situation prevalent then at Berlin is indicated by the remark of the chronicler who says that by promoting piety by laws and by enforcing them many impure designs are brought to the surface[76].

After his release from prison, Andreas Müller returned to the still Swedish Stettin where he spent his last days. His sad experiences at Berlin led to severe attacks of mental depression during which he threw many of his manuscripts into the fire.[77] Andreas Müller died in 1694 after having donated a large number of his books and manuscripts to the library of the Gymnasium at Stettin[78].

When Leibniz received the news of Müller's death he wrote to Father Verjus:

"Here in Germany we have lost an excellent man, named Müller, who was good in oriental languages, and even in Chinese . . ."[79].

Andreas Müller passed on his interest in oriental languages to the personal physician of the Elector, Christian Mentzel. By order from his sovereign, Mentzel was taught the Chinese language by the French Jesuit missionary, Couplet, whom the Elector had invited to Berlin. Mentzel also came into contact with foreign linguists and even became interested in South American languages. Although he had to accompany the Elector on his many campaigns and journeys, he produced a "big dictionary" and a grammar of the Chinese language. Moreover, he collected all possible information and materials relating to China, Japan and the other

[73] A. B. König, *Versuch einer historischen Schilderung der Hauptveränderungen der Religion, Sitten, Gewohnheiten, Künste, Wissenschaften etc. Residenzstadt Berlin* . . .. vol. II, Berlin, 1793, p. 137.

[74] Donald F. Lach, loc cit., p. 573.

[75] A. B. König, loc. cit., vol. III, Berlin, 1795, p. 25; Donald F. Lach, ibid.

[76] A. B. König, loc. cit., p. 27.

[77] C. Stichler, loc. cit., p. 173.

[78] David Fridericus Ebert, *Historiam bibliothecae templi Collegiati B. Mariae Dicati* . . .. Stettini, 1783. – Vide the Appendix containing the note on Andreas Müller and the catalogue of his collections presented to the library of the Gymnasium at Stettin by D. F. Ebert, ibid., pp. VIII–XI.

[79] Quoted after Donald F. Lach, loc. cit., p. 575.

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countries of Asia. One result of his studies was the publication of a short chronology of all the Chinese emperors, based on a Chinese manuscript[80].

The trade with the "East Indies" in addition to foreign commodities also brought news of the highly developed medical science of oriental physicians. Oriental medicine was praised by the physician A. Cleyer, who in particular recommended Chinese drugs prepared from indigenous herbs[81].

Tea was known in the European countries participating in the colonial trade by the second half of the XVII century. Tea as a drink was introduced to Brandenburg through a successful treatment of the Elector by Bontekoe, a physician from Hamburg, who, by alleviating the Elector's gout, acquainted the upper strata of society with this foreign beverage. Christian Mentzel requested A. Cleyer to send him some samples with drawings and descriptions of the tea plant. His writings informed the educated public of Germany about this rare and valuable plant for the first time[82]. Similarly he wrote about the "grey amber" from East India and the cultivation of the clove tree which had been kept secret by the Dutch[83]. Christian Mentzel in collaboration with A. Cleyer, collected further voluminous materials from the Orient which he intended to publish. But in spite of certain partial successes, he, no less than A. Müller, met with failure on account of the generally backward conditions in Brandenburg. The "Japanese Flora", based on a collection made with the help of Cleyer of 1,360 paintings of Japanese plants, birds and animals by Japanese artists with their Japanese names, could not be published. He was only able to publish his preface in 1695[84].

If we consider the Elector of Brandenburg's efforts to establish trade to the East Indies and the activities of a few pioneers in oriental studies in the Brandenburgian state of the XVII century, we come to the conclusion that the failure in both these fields arose from the same cause. The general conditions in the Holy German Empire, which was thrown back economically and politically by the Thirty Years' War, and above all the extreme social-economic backwardness of Brandenburg itself, prevented a normal development of the primary accumulation of capital and at the same time impeded the advance of science.

[80] Christian Mentzel, *Kurtze Chinesische Chronologie oder Zeit-Register, aller Chinesischen Kayser bis 1696 . . .*, Berlin, 1696. – Another publication by the same author: *Sylloge minutiarum lexici sinico-characteristici*, Nuremberg, 1685.

[81] A. Cleyer, *Herbarium parvum Sinicis vocabulis constans*, Francfurt, 1681; *Specimen Medicinae Sinicae*, Francfurt, 1682.

[82] *Von der Neigung . . .*, loc. cit., p. 13.

[83] Ibid., pp. 14–15.

[84] Ibid., pp. 15, 17. – It is to be regretted that the *Cleyeri Miscellanea* which included, among other material, some papers sent by A. Cleyer to Christian Mentzel, are missing in the German State Library, Berlin, due to the devastations and disturbances of World War II.

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Appendix

Note on Andreas Müller and the Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Books presented by him to the Library of the Gymnasium at Stettin[85]

Nam Andreas Müllerus, Augustissimi Caesaris Leopoldi et Seren. Elect. Brand. consiliarius, qui a Patria Greiffenhaga, Pomeraniae trans-viadrinae oppido, Greiffenhagius coguominari maluit, ut eo melius ab illo Andrea Müllero, qui Wildenbrugi erat natus, distingui posset, cum duobus prioribus donatoribus fere uno eodemque tempore secunda renovandae bibliothecae iecit fundamenta. Liceat quoque mihi curriculum hujus Polyhistoris bene meriti et inusitata linguarum Orientis notitia viri excellentis brevibus delineare (c) Lucem adspexit Ao. 1630, et 1646 abiit ad academiam Rostochiensem, qua et almis Gryphiswaldensibus et Wittebergensibus perlustratis Ao. 1653 d. 30 Ap. ad regimen scholae Regiomontanae in Nova-Marchia est adhibitus, paulo post Ao. 1654 d. 16. Sept. laurea ornatus est a Rostochiensium Philosophorum ordine. Deinde Praepositus ecclesiae fuit Treptouiensis, indeque ex amore Philologiae in Angliam descessit, et Londini decem annos in Admundi Castelli aedibus vixit, et non solum hospiti suo ad Lexicon-polyglottum, sed etiam Briamo Waltonio ad opus biblicum edendum suppetias tulit. Redux factus in Germaniam Bernauiensi ecclesiae in Marchia-media praefuit, inde Berolinum evocatus munera et dignitates Praepositi ecclesiarum, Ephori Gymnasii, et Consiliarii ecclesiastici Senatus obtinuit. Quibus tamen omnibus A. 1685 sponte se abdicavit, Sedinumque se contulit, ut litteraturae Orientali summo studio vacare posset. Cum vero non parem haberet in lata multarum linguarum atque ipsius difficillimae Sinicae notitia, re vera animum enixe applicans suum ad investigandas rationes et compendia linguae Sinicae, mirum non est, dostissunos in orbe viros, Kircherum, Adamandum, Theuenotium, Welschium, Cupletium eius amicitiam expetivisse, ipsum vero et Ludolfum ac Tenzelium mutuose amasse, magnique se aestimasse. Scripsit multos libros, quorum plumni exstant quidem, ast dolendum, cum paulo anto mortem multa manuscripta, epistolasque in ignem coniccisse. Ego quidem nescio, an vis morbi usum rationis superaverit, aut an hoc modo proposito consilioque de abolendis scriptis et reprimendis inventis suis fuerit satisfacturus.

En! vitiis nemo sine nascitur optimus ille est,
Qui minimis urgetur: ait Horatius ille.

Sed plurima illorum et imprimis illa Clavis Sinica, quam latine et belgice, si congruum aliquod praemium sive Principes sive Respublicae sive Societates

[85] Andreas Müller presented 1110 books and manuscripts to the Gymnasium in 1694. For some time Müller's collection was kept separately in the library but later many of his books became mixed with the rest of the stock. This is the reason why D. F. Ebert could only list 103 books, 38 manuscripts and 9 maps and drawings in 1783: M. Wehrmann, *Geschichte der Bibliothek des Marienstift-gymnasiums in Stettin*, in: Baltische Studien, vol. 44, Stettin, 1894, p. 208.

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statuere dignarentur, concinnandam promiserat, flammis, quod bene atque feliciter evenerat, sunt erepta ardentissimis, eta adhuc inveniuntur in nostra bibliotheca, uti Catalogus Manuscriptorum et librorum rariorum a Müllero nostro donatorum dluribus nos docebit.

Catalogus
Sinicorum et aliorum Orientalium rariorum librorum et Manuscriptorum qui ab Andr. Müllero bibliothecae Marianae sunt donati et h. t. adsunt.

Libri Sinici Impressi.

1. Volumen in kl. Royal Beschriebener Abdrücke der Sinesischen Landcharten, wovon die Kupferplatte selbst noch auf der Bibliothek ist.
2. Confutius Golianus kl. Fol. cum Commentario.
3. -- – Wroesenianus cum figuris kl. Fol.
4. Mencius Icnensis kl. Fol.
5. – – Witsenianus Secundus kl. Fol.
6. – – – – – III. Fol. King-puen-Pe-ven
7. Peven-Pars alia Tetrabiblii.
8. Su-xu-he, Tetrabiblii –
9. Fragmenta Witseniana I. II. III. IV. V. VI.
10. Annalium Sinicorum kl. Fol. IX. X.
11. – – – – – – XIII–IV.
12. – – – – – – XV. XVI. XVII.
13. Theophrastus Sinicus, seu index herbariorum Sinicorum curiosissimus kl. Fol.
14. Historia Geographica ad aetatem Tai-Mingarum Tom XX, XXI, XXII. kl. Fol.
15. San-kue, Introductio Ponsophica cum figuris multis NB. welches 100 Gulden gekostet hat.
16. Matricula Imperii Fol. cum fig.
17. Pi-pa-ki h. e. Clavicymboli Memoria.
18. Kalendarium Sinicum ad An. Kia-u.
19. Lohoa – – 12 mo.
20. Tabula Sortilega Fol.
21. Imagines – cum Inscriptionibus.
22. Libellus Visitatorius Fol. –
23. – – – – – Fol. sed mutilus.
24. Fragmenta Varia – de re vestiaria – et l. chun-cieu –
25. Fragmenta Reiskeniana –
26. – – – Witseniana.
27. – – – Seideliana. Imp. sin –
28. Monumentum Sinicum restauratum a Müllero, NB, wozu der seel. Müller die Kupferplatten hat auf seine Kosten stechen lassen, und wovon noch 6 Stück auf der Bibliothek vorhanden sind. –
29. Oratio Domina Sinice cum notis Berolini 4to.
30. Monumentum Sinici-historia el textus 4to.
31. Andr. Mülleri de sinarum rebus Commentatio Alphabetica.

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32. Oratib dominica Sinice 4to.
33. Textus herbarii Sinici de Gin-Seng. 1 Blatt.
34. Praestantissimae acque ac pretiosissimae Radicis, quam Sinae Gin-San, Japones Nisi vocant, plenaria descriptio; cujus tabula aenae adhub ad est in bibliotheca nostra.

Manuscripta Sinica.

1. Volumen I. Mapparum Geographicarum in Mittel Royal, quas Andr. Müllerus ipse concinnaverat cum multis figuris.
2. – – II. Mappar. Geographic. in quo opusculo Imperii Sinar. variae locorum nomenclaturae continentur cum multis figuris et adnotationibus Andr. Mülleri.
3. Volum III. Apographerum LXXIX. Mülleri, in quo Varia Monumenta variis linguis et scripturis concinnata sunt imprimis Sinica. kl. Royal xu-tu.
4. Manuscriptum rarissimum Mülleri Sinicum in quo Charecteres Sin. latine et belgice explicantur, quod mejudice est Clavis Sinica praestantissima, cujus folia studio collecta compingi curavit bibliothecarius 1780.
5. Elenchus posteriorum Regum Sinens. historia.
6. Formula loquendi pro ementibus et vendentibus. NB. No. 56 sind in einem roth gewässerten Mohrbande.
7. Preces Christianae
8. aliae – – –
9. De Strategematibus.

} in einem roth gewässerten Mohrbande.

10. Liber medicus herbarii Sinici de Gin-Seng.
11.–13. Libelli Visitatorii. I, II, III.
14.–17. Epistolae Sinicae, I, II, III, IV.
18. Varia Alphabeta Romana Sinice tradita.

Manuscripta rariora Orientalia.

1. Alcorani Capita VI. priora 4to auf Pergament.
2. Fragmentum Alcorani Fol. Lederband mit notis manuscriptis Ioh. Grary. Angli.
3. Libellus de lotionibus Muhammedis.
4. Fragmenta quaedam Arabice.
5. Omaris Nesephaei institutio Arabice cum versione interlineari Malaica 4to auf Pergament.
6. Frisch Ogli Nomenclator poeticus in quo Voces Alcorani Arabico Turcice explicantur auf Pergament im Pergamentbande.
7. – Aliud Exempl. 1 Blatt.
8. Historicon Brachmannicum.
9. Lexicon Arabico Turcicum gr. 8vo im Englischen Bande mit goldenen Schnitte.
10. Liturgia magna Manuscr. Armenicum in Corduan mit goldenen Schnitte – welches Müller Ao. 1642. von dem Armenischen Presbyter Iacob de Gregoriis gekauft hat.
11. Alphabetum Iapanicum Sinice explicatum Fol. Perg. Band in Miacko gekauft.
12. Fragmenta IV. Iapanica.
13. Apographum Mappae Veneti –
14. Volumen in quo 99 Fragmenta scriptiuncularum Oriental. continentur Fol. in grün Pergament.

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15. Folia quaedam Malabarica.
16. Abdallae Beidavaei historia. 4to.
17. Lexicon Persico Turcicum 4to Perg. Band mit goldenen Schnitt in membranis nitidissimum Manuser.
18. De bello contra Christianos gerendo in Pergamenis Pergamentb. 4to mit goldenen Schnitt.
19. Libri Apocryphi V. T. Turcice in einem Franzbande mit goldenen Schnitte. Man- in membr. nitidiss.
20. Epistolae Turcicae variae 4to in membr. nitid.

Libri impressi Orient. aliique rariores.

1. Fidei Orthodoxae brevis confessio Arabice et latine Romae 4to 556.
2. Elementa Arabico-Syriaca una cum quibusdam precibus 4to 597.
3. Petraei Psalterium Davidis, lingua Coptica cum versione Arabica Lugd. B. 4to 663.
4. Nisselii liber Ruth Aethiopice. 4to
5. — — homilia Aethiopica Lugd. B. 660.
6. Petraei Prophetia Ionae, Ioel, Iophonia, Malachia, Aethiopice et latine Lugd. B. 661.
7. — Clavis Arabicae Persicae et Turcicae Lugd. B.
8. — elementa Arabico Siriaca. — — —
9. Historia Tamerlanis Arabice Lugd. Bat. 636.
10. Geographia Nubiensis Arabice.
11. Alferganus i. e. elementa astronomica opera Golii 4to.
12. Historia Saracenica 8vo.
13. Euclidis elementa geometrica in lingua Arabica Romae Fol. 594.
14. Psalterium Armenicum 8vo Franzb. mit goldnen Schnitt.
15. Tabulae Armenicae —
16. Geographia Armenica. 12mo
17. Petri Paulo doctrina christiana Armeno versa gr. 4to Lut. Par.
18. Vocabularium Persicum Arabico Turcicum kl. 8vo.
19. En Iacob
20. Liber Nizachon Lipmani.
21. Catechismus Lutheri kl. 8vo Russice.
22. Lexicon Rabb. D. Cohen de Lara Fol.
23. Ner. Mitzva 4to.
24. Nov. Testam. Hibernicum —
25. Martini Martinii Sinicae historiae Decas prima et secunda Monachii 658.
26. Sadi Rosarium —
27. Wheloci IV. Evang. Persice Fol Londini.
28. Iobi Ludolsi comment ad histor. Anthiopicam Fol. 691.
29. Preces Christianae Russice.
30. Novum Testamentum Siriacum.
31. Severi Alexandrini de ritibus baptismi Siriace 4to Antwerpiae.
32.–34. Andr. Mülleri de Sinensium rebus Opuscula Orientalia in 3 Quartb. mit Weisspapier durchschossen, und mit vielen Marginalien und Bemerkungen des Verfassers, welche Bibliothekario bey Ausmittelung obiger Handschriften zu statten gekommen sind.

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35. Evangelia IV. et acta apostolorum Malaice Oxfort 677.
36. Abdallae Beidavaei historia Sinensis Ienae 989.
37. Athan. Kircheri prodromus Coptus Romae 636 gr. 4to.
38. – – – lingua Aegyptiaca restituta Romae 644. gr. 4to.
39. Franc. Rivola Dictionarium Armeno latinum Lut. Par. 683.
40. Andr. Mülleri Varia Opuscula Orientalia in Fol. Pergamentb. cum marginalibus.
41. – – – Specimen Lexici Sinici et Mandarinici Fol.
42. – – – Basilicon Sinense 4to.
43. – – – Imperii Sinensis nomenclator.
44. – – – Unterricht von der Sineser Schr. und Druck. Berlin 4to. 680 und 8vo.
45. Abulfedae Chorasimiae. Lond. 650.
46. Alhan. Kircheri turris Babel Amstel. gr. Fol. 679.
47. – – – China monumentis illustrata Amstel 667 Fol.
48. a Meninsky thesa urus lingu. Orientalium Turcicae, Arabicae Persicae nimirum Lexicon Turcico,Arabico Persicum Viennae 680. Fol.
51. – – – Grammatica Turcica Viennae 680.
52. Buxtorfi Concordantiae Bibliorum Basel gr. Fol. 632.
53. Kirstenii Grammat. Arabica Bresl. Fol.
54. Velschii Comment. in Ruznamenaurus Aug. Vind. 676.
55. Munsteri Calend. hebraicum Basel 527.
56. Marci Pauli Veneti de regionibus Orientalibus Col. Brand. 671. 4to.
57. Haithoni Armeni historia Orientalis 671.
58. Andr. Mulleri de Chataja Ber. 671. –
59. Mar. Paulus Venetus Reisen l'Amsterdam 664.
60. Pocockii historia Dynastiarum aut. Abel Pharaiio Arabice et latine Oxon. 663.
61. Joh. Vicars decapla in Psalmor Lond. 655.
62. Thomae Mareschalli Versio IV. Evang. Ies. Chr. Dortr. 665 4to.
63. Iesu Christi Evangelia ab Ulfila Stockholm 671.
64. Hutteri biblia Hebraica Hamb. 587.
65. Biblia Lithuanica 8vo.
66. Iac. Goar Rituale Graecorum Fol. 647.
67. Biblia Britannica Vet. Lundini 677.
68. Biblia Virginiana Cambridge. 4to 663.
69. Roberti Flud utriusque Cosmi historia Fol. Oppenhemii 617.

An Charten und Zeichnungen.

1. Große gezeichnete Chart evon China auf 6 Royal Bogen in einer hölzernen Büchse.
2. Charte von Indien.
3. Braminische Geschichte. –
4.–6. Adams und Ewas Grab und Bilder, und
7.–8. Chinesische Bilder.

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The Institution and Working of Caste in the Latter Part of the Eighteenth Century from European Sources

V. P. S. Raghuvanshi

I. Indian social organization

The most striking feature of Indian society was its stratification into social classes marked off from others on the basis of social status determined by birth. The Hindu social organization was dominated by the institution of caste, which as Max Weber observes signifies the enhancement and transformation of social distance into a religion, or more strictly a magical principle[1]. The institution was universal in its application and created absolute and permanent stratifications of the community. The social classes were not dynamic, and the social status of the individual was not variable while inter-class social intercourse through marriage was inconceivable.

In Indian society the Hindu was necessarily known by his caste – "a man without caste was an insulting epithet which in no case could be forgiven or forgotten"[2]. Pride of caste formed an elementary ingredient of Hindu nature and Dubois says that the Hindus were much more attached to their caste "than the gentry of Europeans are to their rank"[3]. What is significant is the fact that the attachment to caste of Hindus both high and low was formidable and Christian missionaries counted it among the chief obstacles to their conversion. Wilson makes the following interesting observation on the attachment of the Hindus to caste:

"The multiplication of castes in India, is not the enactment of any code, though it may be remotely the effect; it is the work of the people, among the most degraded of whom, prevails, not the shame, but the 'pride' of caste. The lowest native is no outcaste, he has an acknowledged place in society; he is the member of a class; and he is invariably more retentive of the distinction than those above him. In depicting the horrors of the system, European writers lose sight of the compensations. The veriest Chandala, who is one of a community, is less miserable, less unhappy, than many of the paupers of the civilized communities of Europe, with whom no man owns companionship or kindred; they are the true outcastes – not the Pariah or Chandala"[4].

[1] R. M. MacIver, *Society*, New York, 1946, p. 172.

[2] J. A. Dubois, *Description of the Character, Manners and Customs etc. of Hindus*, ed. by Beauchamp, Oxford, 1897, p. 41.

[3] Ibid. See also F. Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. III, pp. 466–68; J. Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, Second edition rev. by his daughter, 2 vols., London, 1834, vol. I, p. 237.

[4] J. Mill, *History of British India*, London, 1858, vol. I, footnote p. 140.

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The phenomenon of caste divided the entire Hindu population into three broad social groups, the privileged, the unprivileged and the untouchables. Broadly speaking, the people of the Brahman, Kshattriya and Vaisya castes belonged to the first group, were the 'twice-born', and were entitled to the ceremony performed by the Brahman priest initiating them into second birth. The 'sacred thread' was the chief distinction and an emblem of the superiority of these high-caste Hindus[5]. The members of the second group, loosely termed 'Sudras', could not perform the ceremony, were debarred from the privileges of study and recital of scriptures, but the Brahman priests would act as instructors and family priests of some of the upper classes[6]. The untouchables constituted the oppressed group of society. They were Sudras of impure birth, performing social duties which subjected them to constant defilement. They were condemned to permanent social degradation, denied elementary civic rights, and rigidly excluded from all public places, even the neighbourhood of caste Hindus[7].

The institution of caste profoundly influenced the character of society in many ways and will be studied in detail in the following pages. We shall also examine how it permeated the Muslim social organization which theoretically upheld the minimum of class distinctions. Dominated by the Hindu environment, and built mostly of the Hindu stock, Muslim society could not escape the contagion of caste. In the 18th century, a class in Muslim society was very much patterned on caste lines[8].

II. The problem of classification and definition

It is difficult to evolve a scheme of the classification of castes as applicable to the country as a whole. Similar difficulty arises in regard to the definition of caste, and we may agree with Sir Denzil Ibbetson "that nothing can be more variable and more difficult to define than caste; and that the fact that a generation is descended from ancestors of any given caste creates a presumption and nothing more, than that generation is also of the same caste, a presumption liable to be defeated by an infinite variety of circumstances"[9]. What we can do is to inter-

[5] Dubois, op. cit., pp. 24, 163; C. Coleman, *The Mythology of the Hindoos*, London, 1832, p. 155; F. Buchanan, *Antiquities, Topography, Statistics etc. of Eastern India*, ed. by Montgomery Martin, 3 vols., London, 1837, vol. I, p. 207.

[6] Dubois, op. cit., pp. 24, 163. Also Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, pp. 736–38; Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 235.

[7] Dubois, pp. 8–16, 66–80; J. Forbes, *Memoirs*, vol. I, pp. 202–3; Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, pp. 466, 738–39.

[8] Sir J. A. Malcolm, *Memoir of Central India*, 2 vols., London, 1832, vol. II, pp. 110–11; Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 144–46; Buchanan; *Southern India*, vol. II, pp. 421–22.

[9] Sir D. Ibbetson, *Castes in the Punjab*, London, 1917, vol. I, pp. 1–2. In this connection he quotes the cynical reflection of the agnostic who summed up his philosophy in the well-known words, "The only thing that I know is that I know nothing, and I am not quite sure that I know that."

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pret the social implications of the institution and the influence it exercised on the life and mind of the individual. It was not merely the basis of social stratification, a fundamental feature of division among the Hindus, but a vital, comprehensive social association implanting in man strong social prejudices, attitudes and class consciousness. The words Brahman, Kshattriya, Vaisya, Sudra, were still current in most of the caste designations, but they had no more than a vague generic significance. The multiplicity of castes or sub-castes was a hard and striking fact of social organization and it rested on various social factors, primarily on endogamy and connubium, and secondarily on race, tribe, sect, tradition, locality, occupation etc. We may agree with the French missionary that in many cases "the name of a caste forms after all its best indication"[10]. The other striking feature was that the different classes were barred from free intercourse with each other, "the inferior ones were necessarily excluded from intimate social contacts with the superiors"[11].

III. Caste and marriage

Caste governed the code of rules and conventions relating to marriage in Hindu society. In the 18th century, inter-caste matrimonial connections were beyond the comprehension of people and were liable to be visited by the sentence of excommunication. During the period we have evidence that the rules of caste if violated in other respects were leniently viewed, but those in respect of marriage and sexual intercourse were rigorously enforced. A section of Brahmans towards the coast under the Peshwa government was detected violating the established rule of marriage. They were marrying their daughters to the sons of their sisters; hence they were excommunicated[12] If a girl of high caste in the Peshwa's dominions was detected in adultery, she could be sold and treated as a slave[13]. In this sense caste implied hereditary continuation of families in the same group and prevented wide inter-mixture of blood[14]. Marriage in the same caste was a social maxim of almost universal applicability among the Hindus. Malabar alone appears to be an exception where the Brahmans accepted a girl from the Nayars, a practice sanctioned by the laws of Manu[15]. Elsewhere

[10] Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 25.

[11] E. Ives, *Voyage to India in the year 1754*, London, 1773, p. 26. See also J. S. Stavorinus, *Voyages to the East Indies (1768–71)*, 3 vols, London, 1798, vol. II, p. 480. G. Forster, *Journey from Bengal to England*, 2 vols, London, 1798, vol. I, p. 37. A. Dow, *The History of Indostan*, 2 vols., London, 1770 and 1772, vol. I, p. XXXII. L. Scrafton, *Reflections on the Government of Indostan*, London, 1763, pp. 6, 9. Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, pp. 16–23.

[12] *Selections from Raja Satara and Peshwas' Diaries*, vol. II, case 317.

[13] Ibid., case 103. [14] Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 34.

[15] Abbé de Guyon, *A New History of the East Indies*, 2 vols., London, 1757, vol. I, p. 315. J. M. Grose, *Voyage to the East Indies*, 2 vols, London, 1772, vol. I, pp. 243–33. Also the laws of *Manu* ed. by F. Max Müller.

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caste suffered from various distinctions of rank even within its own sub-groups and these in their turn influenced marriage. As a general rule, among castes whose people were not privileged to be reckoned as 'twice-born', the sub-castes had become entirely distinct endogamous groups. In this sense anything like a Sudra caste was non-existent. The various artisan and professional castes loosely termed Sudra, by the end of the 18th century, had organized themselves into separate endogamous units of society. Their sub-divisions had become distinct castes[16]. So strict was the rule that even sexual connection of the woman with a man outside her caste invariably entailed her ex-communication from her own[17]. This rule was rigidly observed even by those castes which were considered 'altogether vile'[18].

If matrimony within the group be construed as the fundamental test of caste, then the Kayasthas of Northern India, who might have been one caste before, had ceased to be so by the end of the 18th century. Their various sub-divisions like those of Srivastavas, Bhatnagars, Mathurs, Saxenas, Gaur etc. had formed themselves into separate matrimonial groups and had thus become separate castes[19]. Similarly in South India, the 'Panchalars' including people of the trades of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, although reckoned as one caste, did not admit of intergroup matrimonial relationship[20].

The relationship of sub-caste with marriage was, however, not necessarily uniform in the upper castes. In Bengal, the Brahmans as also the Kayasthas constituted single castes, as distinctions of sub-castes were not material in regulating marriages within the same group. Here those of higher birth (Kulins) were coveted by all inferior to them. Here Kulinism, although it encouraged a nefarious traffic in women, prevented the formation of rigid endogamous sub-groups[21]. But this was not the case in Northern India or Central India. In Bihar, the Brahmans claiming descent from Kanauj had split into various local sub-divisions, and even among them there were no inter-matrimonial relations. The other Brahman sub-castes, too, were endogamous sub-groups[22]. In Central India, also, we find that there was nothing like a uniform Brahman caste. The Brahmans had frittered into endless, strictly endogamous sub-castes[23]. The same was true of the Vaisya community in Northern India. It was divided into several sub-divisions which were endogamous[24]. The Rajputs were a solid exception. Their sub-groups arranged on a clan basis were exogamous, and marriage was regulated primarily on the

[16] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 163–66, vol. II, pp. 451–64. Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 249, vol. II, pp. 24–25, 27–28, 119, 127–29, 153–55, 329, 338, 384, vol. III, pp. 22, 53, 184.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, p. 177.

[19] Ibid., p. 163.

[20] Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. II, p. 269.

[21] Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. I, p. 440. Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. III, pp. 155–156.

[22] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 153–56.

[23] Malcolm, *Memoir*, vol. II, pp. 118–24.

[24] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 493–95; vol. II, pp. 113–19, 451–64.

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basis of 'purity of descent'. This, too, could be over-ruled as a serious consideration if the girl of the lower class or family belonged to a rich influential family. Marriage outside the broad Rajput kin-group was however held in odium[25]. Malcolm cites the degradation of the whole clan of Pamars in the social scale in Central India when their Chief of Dhar married his girl to a Maratha prince with whom "the poorest of the proud Rajput Chiefs" would disdain eating together[26].

As such we may lay down that caste was necessarily an endogamous group, but in the functional castes the sub-groups were also endogamous everywhere. In the non-functional higher castes, the various sub-castes were not necessarily so everywhere, though in Northern India, among the Brahmans, Vaisyas, and Kayasthas, they had become so[27].

IV. Caste and feeding

European writers of the period have especially noted that there was nothing like inter-dining among people of different castes. As a rule people did not accept food dressed or touched by one of inferior caste. Of the people of Bengal, Stavorinus, the Dutch Admiral, says that if any one took a meal with another of lower caste, he was degraded to the rank of the man with whom he observed this intimacy. By this indulgence he forfeited the privilege of his caste "and the people of the higher orders will suffer every kind of want, rather than submit to anything derogatory to their dignity"[28]. At the opening of the 19th century Buchanan comments that though caste in certain respects had been modified by the force of time, yet in matters pertaining to food, it retained its strength in full[29]. It is not difficult to see that caste rigorously overruled commensality outside its fold, nor could it view with complacency the violations of its cherished usages in relation to foods and drinks. People of different castes could worship the same gods, observe the same ceremonies, but in no case eat together. The delights of a common table were altogether foreign to the taste of Hindu social consciousness of the period[30]. Capt. Williamson tells us further that:

"So extremely scrupulous are the natives in the preparation of their victuals, and their consumption that, if any person not of the very same caste (with the reservation of the Brahmins or priests) should touch their bodies or their clothes, or any other article within the area, or even the surface of the area itself (in which food is prepared) the whole meal together with any earthenware, standing within the circum-

[25] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, pp. 459, 464. Malcolm, *Memoir*, vol. II, pp. 130–31.

[26] Malcolm, *Memoir*, vol. II, pp. 130–131.

[27] See also Blunt, *Census of U. P.*, 1911, part. I, p. 32.

[28] Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. I, p. 410.

[29] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, pp. 746–47.

[30] Williamson, *The General E. I. Guide and Vade Mecum*, ed. by Gilchrist, London, 1825, pp. 95–96.

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vellation, . . . would be thrown away as being polluted. Nay, any portion in the mouth must be ejected; nor till the party had performed an ablution could he attempt to resume his ordinary labours, or join in society with his compeers"[31].

The injunctions of caste in respect to food, severe as they were, must have affected free social intercourse among the Hindus, and produced a narrow social consciousness[32]. In the terrible famine of Bengal in 1770, we learn that many Hindus unable to resist "the cravings of appetite" ate food from "impure hands and lost caste"[33]. It appears however that strictness in dietary was more or less confined to what should be called 'kachcha' or unfried food. But we cannot generalize as the data is very meagre. In the eastern parts of the U. P., Buchanan observed that Brahmans had no objection to eating anything "fried in ghee even by the hands of a Sudra, provided he is of pure birth". In Bengal, however, objection was taken to this practice, and even "curds" etc. from people of "inferior castes" were not to be accepted[34]. Such conventions differed from locality to locality and from caste to caste. We find that Rajputs, Vaisyas, Kayasthas, Ahirs etc. in the north were not hostile to the use of sweetmeats and grains fried in oil and prepared in shops. But "without loss of caste" a Brahman could drink water only from the hands of those people whom he could condescend to instruct[35].

Caste and "forbidden foods"

The elaborate principles of purity and cleanliness – internal and external – which formed a prominent part of the social ethics of people, were also connected with caste. The idea of the "defilement" and "pollution" of an individual through tasting "forbidden foods" was strongly working in every caste. Naturally caste rules did not permit its members indiscriminate use of every article and every type of diet. "To the question of what is the difference between such and such a caste", says Wilks, the author of *The History of Mysore*, "the first answer will certainly be

[31] Ibid.

[32] J. Forbes, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 128. E. Ives, *Voyage*, p. 68. Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 285. Dubois cites an interesting case:
"A Brahmin woman whom I knew, allowed herself to be persuaded by a Sudra woman, a friend of hers, to eat part of a stew which the latter had cooked, and she even went so far as to say she thought it excellent. A short time afterwards the two friends quarrelled, and at the end of a violent altercation the Sudra woman to punish her adversary and silence her at the same time publicly proclaimed the sin which the other in a moment of greediness had committed. Covered with shame and confusion at this unexpected revelation, which she found it impossible to refute, the poor woman fled from the place in despair, vowing, too late, that she would never allow herself to be caught again". Ibid.

[33] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. III, p. 162.

[34] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, p. 182.

[35] Ibid., vol. II, pp. 472–73, 736.

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to indicate what they respectively can and cannot eat"[36]. The castes which observed their social injunctions relating to foods, abstained from the forbidden articles like meat, liquors etc. rose higher in social precedence than those which disregarded them. For this reason in Bengal the social status of peasants was higher than that of "mechanics" who did not so much observe the dictates of morality[37]. The same was also the case in South India[38]. In this respect, caste prescribed different codes of ethics for different groups, one for the higher and the other for the lower one. The use of meat, intoxicants and liquors was forbidden to the Brahmans as it was not warranted by the excellence of their caste[39], but this was not to apply to the lower castes[40]. Laxities in the Brahmanical rules of life regarding the use of liquor are noticeable, but in South India they abstained from "meat" almost to a man[41]. In Orissa and Bengal the use of fish and perhaps meat was permissible[42]. Excluding the Brahmans and Vaisyas, the greater part of the population however was not very scrupulous and ate, as Robert Orme says, "although very sparingly both of fish and flesh, but like the Jews, not of all kinds indifferently"[43].

The relation of caste with foods has been aptly emphasised by Craufurd: "Though the other castes have greater liberty with respect to diet than the Brahmans, yet, they scrupulously refrain from what is forbidden them, and will not partake of what may have been provided by an inferior caste, or different religion"[44]. The Hindus scrupulously observed the taboos relating to foods. As such on board the ships, the British Government allowed them to carry their own water and provisions. On many occasions it was noted that when provisions did not last them throughout the voyage, the Hindu sepoys for days together continued "almost expiring from thirst and want of nourishment". They would not be tempted to eat food polluted by the touch of "inferior" hands and resigned themselves ungrudgingly to voluntary starvation[45]. Such a people could certainly not

[36] *Historical Sketches*, Appendix IV, vol. I, p. 505.
[37] Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. II, p. 480.
[38] Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 17.
[39] Dubois, p. 284. J. Forbes, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 349. Ives, *Voyage*, p. 23. Q. Craufurd, *Sketches relative to the History, Religion and Manners of the Hindoos*, London, 1790, p. 117.
[40] W. Tennant, *Thoughts on the effects of the British Government on the State of Indostan*, London, 1807, p. 110. Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. II, pp. 127–29, pp. 528–29, vol. III, pp. 17, 22, 23, 184, 336.
[41] Dubois, pp. 284–85.
[42] *The Fifth Report from the Select Committee (1812)*, 3 vols., Calcutta, ed. by W. K. Firminger, vol. III, p. 9.
[43] R. Orme, *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan*, 3 vols, Madras, 1861, vol. I, p. 5.
[44] Craufurd, *Sketches*, p. 117.
[45] Craufurd, *Sketches*, footnote p. 118. Scrafton, *Reflections*, p. 12. *Voyage of H. M. S. Harmich to India, 1745–49, Bengal past and present*, vol. 45, 1933, pp. 100–101.

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play the kind host, according to modern standards, to anyone outside their caste, least of all to foreigners supposed to have no code of social morality[46]. It is not surprising that Niebuhr wrote of them as "the most tolerant nation in the world", but that "no nation was less sociable than these Hindus"[47].

V. Caste and profession

The institution of caste played no insignificant part in determining the vocational expression of people in society. This had led Blunt to advocate the view that castes originated from 'Guilds' and in course of time became endogamous[48]. According to Ibbetson, besides "the community of blood", the "community of profession" is a fundamental feature of the institution[49]. From a functional point of view, the greater part of the Hindu social structure certainly lay under the penumbra of caste, and ancestral traditions of vocation worked as strong inhibitions in society. Social sanction of careers was naturally not based on the peculiar tastes and aptitudes of the individual but on sheer accident of birth into some profession defined and delimited in most cases by the arithmetic of caste. In the normal course the son of a priest took to the altar, that of a carpenter to his parental tools, that of a blacksmith to his ancestral forge, and the wheel of economic activity in society continued revolving round the axis of heredity[50]. From Bharat Chandra's *Vidya Sundar* (Bengali) written about the middle of the 18th century, we get an elaborate picture of the general distribution of professions under different castes in Bengal. The Brahmans are described as performing religious and literary functions. The Baidyas followed the medical profession, and the other castes mentioned mostly bear the names of their related professions[51].

[46] Forbes, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 129. E. Ives, *Voyage*, p. 68. Ives says how Hindus of high caste insisted on Europeans "lying upon their backs, while the water is poured into their mouths, lest they should defile the vessel by the touch of either their hands or lips". Ibid. He mentions how on a boating excursion, on account of his ignorance he happened to contaminate the flute of an Indian by touching it with his lips and blowing it. When he returned it to the owner the latter "with great gravity and unconcern immediately threw it into the river". Ibid, p. 30. Dubois reflects on the contempt Hindus had of Europeans for their loose, uncultivated ways of life. Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, pp. 302, 307–108.

[47] *Travels through to Arabia and other countries in the East* 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1792, p. 13.

[48] *Census U. P.* 1911, part. I, p. 325.

[49] *Punjab Castes*, pp. 2–3, 3–4.

[50] Ives, *Voyage*, p. 26. Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. I, p. 411. Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 29. Forbes, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 239. Craufurd, *Sketches*, vol. I, p. 117. Scrafton, *Reflections*, pp. 9–10. Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1803, vol. I, pp. 87–88. Macintosh, *Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in Selections from Calcutta Gazette*, ed. by Seton Kerr, vol. V, Calcutta, part. IV, pp. 651–52.

[51] T. C. Das Gupta, *Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature*, Calcutta, 1935, pp. 219–20.

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Function or occupation had been undoubtedly a primary incentive to the multiplication of castes and in the case of low trades, it may virtually be laid down as a general rule that caste equated with profession and vice versa. The other castes, non-functional in their designations, were also co-related to different spheres of activity[52]. Prejudices pertaining to professions were also wedded to social distinctions of caste and few would normally accept work which lowered the traditional repute and dignity of their caste[53]. The social statistics compiled by Buchanan about British-Indian territories reveal the proponderance of functional castes in Hindu society and impress us with the vital rôle of caste in promoting specialization in arts and crafts to an unusual degree[54].

Laxities of caste versus occupation

What has been said above does not strictly apply to regions which had not attained to a high state of economic development implying complex splitting of trades and crafts, and there differences in profession did not constitute differences of caste. Thus in Assam, even by the beginning of the 19th century, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, weavers, cultivators of betel and makers of garlands did not form distinct castes as in Bengal. The various 'trades' with which people were acquainted were practised by them irrespective of caste, and vested interests on caste lines had not yet crystallized[55]. In other regions highly decentralized economically, the rigidity of caste regarding occupation was also loosening. The 'fences' which defined the spheres of economic interests of the various castes were gradually breaking down. The Brahmans were taking to the profession of arms, the Rajputs were seen taking to business, and the chiefs of quite low castes were settling down as Princes[56]. There were, however, certain recognizable limits which the people of the high castes would not generally cross. It was a popular belief that to do any work which could be left "to the lowest among the Sudras" was to put oneself on their level. Like the Jews, the high-caste-born avoided harnessing their limbs to labour in the field, holding the plough, or following low trades[57]. But on the whole by the end of the century there was a wide reshuffle in the professional arrange-

[52] Craufurd, *Sketches*, vol. I, pp. 113–17.

[53] C. Doyley and F. W. Blagdon, *The European in India*, London, 1813, letter-press to Plates II, IV. Also Forster, *Journey*, vol. I, p. 189.

[54] See also Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, pp. 28–29, 34. Scrafton, *Reflections*, p. 10. Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. I, p. 411.

[55] *Eastern India*, vol. III, pp. 529, 556, 674, 679.

[56] Forster, vol. I, p. 54. Most of the Princes of the Maratha confederacy and many Hindu rulers of south India belonged to castes not included in the "twice born" group, Dubois, p. 675.

[57] Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 111, pp. 54–55. Dow, *Indostan*, vol. I, p. XXXII. Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. I, p. 410. *Eastern India*, vol. I, p. 407, vol. II, p. 733, vol. III, p. 156.

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ments fostered by caste[58]. The over-zealous and fervid protagonists of the institution did not take the change cheerfully. Buchanan vividly describes their sentiments:

"All proper Hindus regret, that in these days no caste adheres to its proper duties, but that many persons, in order to procure a subsistence, betake themselves to professions, for which they were not originally intended"[59].

The rigour of caste was being modified by the strain of economic conditions and poverty often compelled even Brahmans to demean themselves by low callings[60]. The Dutch Admiral reports that at Surat the Brahmans were not much respected, probably because they were working in large numbers as "coolies", carrying goods "in and out of the warehouses" at the European factories[61]. The growing worldly outlook of the Brahmans, the high priestly social class, is visible in every part of the country during the period. It is interesting to note that their secularization was well-nigh complete. They figure prominently in public administration under Indian governments, and owing to their influence over society they were also patronized by the foreign power[62]. In South India their eminence in public administration was not contested by any other caste[63], while in the North they were successfully competing with Kayasthas for employment in the revenue and commercial departments of the Company[64]. They were also crowding the ranks of the Company's sepoy battalions[65]. Wilson remarks about them:

"In modern times the Brahmans, collectively, have lost all claim to the character of a priesthood. They form a nation, following all kinds of secular avocations, and where they are met with in a religious capacity, it is not as Brahman merely, but as being the ministers of temples, or the family Gurus, or priests of the lower classes of the people, offices by no means restricted, though not infrequently extended, to the Brahmanical caste, and agreeably to the primitive system virtually destructive of Brahmanhood"[66].

About Mithila, in Bihar, Buchanan tells us that of the entire Brahman population only 10% followed literary pursuits; about 68% occupied lands either rent-free or assessed, and attended to cultivation; about 10% served under the Zemindars or carried on business, and the rest lived on priestly work or copied books for sale[67]. It is true that those engaged in purely worldly pursuits, 'Lokikas',

[58] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 110–11, 470, vol. II, pp. 407–10.
[59] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, p. 746.
[60] Dubois, p. 295.
[61] Stavorinus, vol. II, p. 484.
[62] Dubois, p. 293. Forbes, vol. I, p. 41. Malcolm, *Memoir*, vol. II, pp. 115–16. *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 153, 490, vol. III, pp. 155–56, 158. Craufurd, pp. 112–13. *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 18–19. vol. II, p. 292, vol. III, p. 243. Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, vol. I, pp. 89–90.
[63] Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, p. 293.
[64] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, p. 736.
[65] Ibid., vol. III, p. 158. Forster, vol. I, p. XII.
[66] Mill, *History of British India*, vol. I, footnote, p. 133.
[7] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. III, p. 156.

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were not revered so much as those who dedicated their lives to higher ideals of study and religion[68]. It was however acknowledged that subsistence on "Bhiksha" was difficult for all in that "degenerate" age, and there could be no escape from material pursuits[69]. Moreover, religious activity implying supervision of worship and ceremonies in temples was not held to be a respectable vocation. On the contrary, these priests were looked down upon, and other Brahmans would have no intimate social association with them[70]. Those who condescended to accept offerings on behalf of the deceased, called "Mahapatras" in the north, were socially very much degraded[71]. Equally debased were those who presided over the domestic ceremonies of people indiscriminately in every caste, although it is true that they generally did not do so[72]. The growing contempt for the purely religious functions of the priest, and the increasing secular outlook of the Brahmans clearly demonstrates that the vested economic interests promoted by caste were fast disintegrating or that these were not sustainable in the disintegrating social economy of the country. In the period under review, the higher castes were encroaching on the interests of the lower castes and the lower castes were also intruding upon superior professions. About Bengal Colebrooke writes that even Brahmans were "exercising the menial profession of a Sudra" and further:

"Every profession, with few exceptions, is open to every description of persons; and the discouragement arising from religious prejudices is not greater than what exists in Great Britain from the effects of municipal and corporation laws"[73].

VI. Caste and social precedence

We have seen how caste had organized society into classes which would admit of nothing like intermarriage and inter-dining, and how it encouraged the formation of functional or occupational groups. The other important social manifestation of caste psychology was social gradation as superior or inferior in status, not on the basis of differences of intellect or character of the individual but of birth. In this respect caste carried the concept of social distance to perfection. The allegory which held Brahmans to have sprung from the head of Brahma, and the Kshattriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras from his arms, thighs and feet, was still believed in and made caste a desideratum of status in Hindu society. We are surprised to read that in Malabar as late as the 18th century the code of caste relating to social

[68] Ibid. Also Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 21. Forbes, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 237.

[69] Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 21.

[70] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 21, 47, 333–34, vol. III, p. 94. Dubois, pp. 110–11. *Eastern India*, vol. II, p. 733, vol. III, pp. 178–79.

[71] *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 154, 208, vol. II, pp. 733, 454, vol. III, pp. 171–72.

[72] Dubois, p. 295.

[73] H. T. Colebrooke, *Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1884 (The Essay completed in 1793), p. 106.

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distance was in force with a severity perceivable in no other part of India. In the last decade of the century Jonathan Duncan actually studied it on the spot. Here the order of rank among castes was as follows: Brahmans, Nayars, Tiyans (cultivators' free men), Malers (Musicians, Conjurers etc.), Pulayans (bondsmen attached to the soil like the Paniyans above the Ghats). The distance to be observed by the lower castes in approaching a Nambudri Brahman is mentioned as follows:

1. A Nayar may approach but must not touch him.
2. A Tiyan was to remain 36 steps off.
3. A Malere three or four steps further off.
4. A Pulayan ninety-six steps.

The distance from a Nayar was to be as follows:

1. A Tiyan to remain 12 steps away.
2. A Malere three or four steps further.
3. A Pulayan ninety-six steps.

A Malere could approach but was not to touch a Tiyan. A Pulayan was not to come near even a Malere or any other caste but a Moplah, the native Muslim of Malabar. If he wished to speak to any of the higher castes, he was to stand at the prescribed distance and cry aloud. If by mistake someone was polluted by his touch, he was to expiate by bathing, recitation of prayers, and change of the sacred thread if he was a Brahman[74]. A Nayar woman was however allowed matrimony with a Nambudri and property descended in the female line i. e. to the sons of sisters[75].

Such a classification of castes on the basis of social precedence and the ranks of different castes is not feasible for other parts of the country. The ranks of different castes varied from place to place, and within the same caste the ranks of different sub-castes were controversial[76]. It cannot however be denied that the social hierarchy of castes in different localities was well-nigh settled and understood[77]. So far as Brahmans are concerned, their "immeasurable superiority" "above the rest of mankind" was crystal clear everywhere[78]. In South India and Bengal, where they constituted almost the only high caste, their eminence was neither questioned nor refuted. In these parts they were held in great respect by all the other castes and those reputed holy were virtually adored by others. In Bengal people swore by their head and kissed their feet[79]. Stavorinus writes:

"There are several castes of Brahmans, which differ in rank and reputation. Some of them are reputed so holy, and held in such high veneration by the people, that the

[74] *Asiatic Researches*, 20 vols for the years 1788–1836, published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, vol. V, p. 5, footnote.

[75] Ibid., p. 29.

[76] Dubois, *Hindu Manners*, pp. 23–24. *British India Analysed*, vol. III, London, 1793, pp. 666–67. *Eastern India*, vol. II, pp. 121–22, vol. III, p. 161.

[77] Orme, *Military Transactions*, vol. I, p. 4.

[78] *Southern India*, vol. III, pp. 467–68. Ives, *Voyage*, p. 23. Stavorinus, *Voyages*, vol. I, p. 410. *British India Analysed*, vol. III, pp. 666–67. Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, vol. I, p. 90.

[79] Scrafton, *Reflections*, p. 6.

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water in which a Brahman belonging to them has washed his feet, is esteemed sacred, and is given to the common Bengalese to drink, who think it the greatest felicity to be allowed a share of such a disgusting beverage"[80].

We learn that when Siraj-ud-daulah returned to his capital after concluding the treaty of Calcutta, February, 1757, he still had vague fears and misgivings as to the intentions and designs of the English traders. Amirchand, the Punjabi merchant, touched the feet of a Brahman and assured him of their good faith[81]. In Peninsular India, where the Kshattriyas were considered "extinct" for many centuries[82], the Brahman was a veritable human god to the lower people, and towards Malabar, a religious Brahman was actually an object of worship. The very sight of him was an inspiration[83]. In the north-western and central parts of India, where other high castes, notably Rajputs and Vaisyas, were equally prominent in society, the Brahmans could not derive similar gain from their birth. J. A. Malcolm informs us that the Rajputs did not extend them "much favour", and even the Brahman ministers of the Maratha government offered them no encouragement. Though their population and the number of their sub-castes in Central India were very large, yet on the whole they were not the predominant community. Very few of them were also either wealthy or learned"[84].

In society, however, caste carried the distinctions of rank very far. In Bengal, we observe that the lower castes were ranged into four grades, the Sat-Sudra, Sudra, Maha-Sudra, Antuja. In the district of Dinajpur, the Baidyas, a medical caste, ranked highest among the Sat-Sudra, the Kayasthas were the next, then were the Navasakha, the nine functional castes of druggists, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, weavers, barbers, potters, cultivators of betel leaf, makers of garlands, workers in shell. After them were the castes of cultivators, makers of sweetmeats, Goyalas (keepers of kine). These formed the pure Sudra group and Brahmans would act as their *gurus* and priests. They were expected to observe high-caste social customs viz. no concubinage, no widow remarriage, abstinence from intoxicants and indiscreet use of flesh. The Brahmans could also drink water from their hands "without loss of caste". The Sudras were inferior to them as they did not strictly observe the customs of the pure Sudras. The Maha-Sudras were those castes that were not altogether vile (*nīcha*) and observed certain principles of decency, while the Antuja were altogether contemptible and depressed and beyond the pale of society. The former group comprised the castes of money-changers, goldsmiths, carpenters, merchants dealing in grains and salt, potters, oil-makers, fishermen, boatmen, makers of lac ornaments, sellers of sweetmeats and confectioners, distillers of liquor etc. etc. Many of these were rich and suffered their "degradation with impatience". The latter group included the various primitive

[80] Stavorinus, vol. I, pp. 429–30.
[81] S. C. Hill, *Bengal in 1756–57*, 3 vols, London, 1905, vol. II, p. 232.
[82] *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 20.
[83] Dubois, pp. 317–18. Forster, *Journey*, vol. I, p. 237. de Guyon, *History*, vol. I, pp. 317–18.
[84] Malcolm, *Memoir*, vol. II, pp. 124–25.

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tribes and menial castes of sweepers, scavengers, tanners and shoemakers, etc. Some of them even ate "the flesh of oxen, which is considered as the utmost degradation of which human nature is capable"[85]. The infection of caste in this respect had spread to such an extent that in the very same caste and sub-caste, in the same locality, there were subtle grades of rank in existence on the basis of purity of descent or other considerations. At the beginning of the 19th century, at Gorakhpur in the U. P., we learn that the Kayasthas of the Srivastava sub-caste were divided into three kin-groups on the basis of the purity of families, and the *krishnapakshis* were the lowest. Like divisions of ranks, those of "Pangtis", prevailed in other castes and their sub-divisions, and probably these were primarily responsible for making the latter endogamous units[86]. In Bengal, among Brahmans differences in rank on a professional basis were well-developed. The teachers of the Sanskrit language were respected more than the priests officiating at ceremonies. Those who officiated for Brahmans alone were respected more than those who worked for other castes of Baidyas and Kayasthas. Those who worked for the Navasakhas rated still lower in public esteem. The classes of Brahmans who degraded themselves by accepting charities in commemoration of the dead were considered impure, so much so that people of lower castes too did not condescend to accept water from their hands. Others who read the funeral service for non-Brahman castes or acted as priests to the degraded castes were likewise considered very impure. The temples founded by persons of low origin were served by priests drawn from the impure Brahman classes[87].

VII. Caste and social privileges

Apart from the distinctions of rank fostered by the institution of caste, we find that the high castes expropriated to themselves certain privileges from which others were excluded. The study of the Scriptures, learning in theology, was almost a monopoly of the Brahmans. The Rajputs and Vaisyas could also study and recite them but not interpret them[88]. Dubois writes that Brahmans were very jealous of their right to read the Vedic texts, the Holy scriptures; and expulsion from caste "without the smallest hope of re-entering it, would be the lightest punishment for a Brahman who exposed these books to the eyes of the profane"[89]. His statement is corroborated by others, and almost entirely by Alexander Dow[90]. Bolts also writes that the Sanskrit language, "most noble and ancient", was a "dead language", "understood only by the Brahmans". The 'Vedas' were held so

[85] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. II, pp. 736–40.
[86] Ibid., vol. II, pp. 451–52.
[87] Ibid., vol. II, pp. 733–34.
[88] Craufurd, *Sketches*, vol. I, pp. 252, 257. Forbes, vol. II, p. 142. *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 138, 196, vol. II, p. 747, vol. III, p. 171.
[89] Dubois, pp. 174–75.
[90] Dow, *Indostan*, vol. I, pp. XXII–XXIII.

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sacred that "no other order of their own people are permitted to read them"[91]. Buchanan mentions that when he requested the Brahman scholars of South India to part with or disclose the contents of the sacred books in their possession, they sternly refused to expose the "slokas" to "profane eyes"[92]. This, however, does not imply that the Brahmans were averse to enlightening others on Hindu theology, the metaphysical part of which appeared so baffling and obscure to the foreign mind. On this point the testimony of William Henry Tone, who commanded a regiment of infantry under the Peshwas, is interesting:

"... I cannot forbear observing, that it is generally believed that the Brahmans have an insurmountable dislike to revealing the mysteries of their religion. I will not presume to say that this is not true; but can only declare, that I have never discovered any such backwardness in the Brahmans whom I have had an opportunity of conversing with"[93].

There is, however, no doubt that higher religious learning was a monopoly of the Brahmans, and to the Europeans it appeared very cruel in the interests of society. They construed it as a mischievous attempt of the priestly class at consolidating its influence in society. It banned higher religious learning to the lower classes with the result that there was a predominance of primitive elements in their religious rites and ceremonies, and religion was not instrumental in effecting the moral catharsis of society as a whole[94]. The Brahmans as a priestly community were also entitled to other privileges, such as gifts and charities in the name of religion, and leniency in punishments. "It is an essential part of the religion of the Hindus", says James Mill, "to confer gifts upon the Brahmans. This is a precept more frequently repeated than any other in the sacred books. Gifts to the Brahmans form always an important and essential part of expiation and sacrifice"[95]. The murder of a Brahman, says Dubois, was considered "the greatest of all known crimes", absolutely unpardonable. Under Indian governments they were exempt from taxes and various other local levies and certain punishments. The people of the low castes were often obliged to work gratuitously for them. Bad faith towards them, either on the part of society or government, was deviltry, which God too had not the authority to condone[96]. In a sense they were above the common laws of the country. Elphinstone reports that under the Poona Government a great distinction was made on account of caste in the award of punishments: "A man of tolerable caste was seldom put to death, except for offences against the State". Even when they were guilty of treason, the Brahmans were not publicly executed but poisoned. He further points out that highway robbery was generally

[91] W. Bolts, *Considerations on India Affairs*, London, 1772, pp. 3–4.
[92] *Southern India*, vol. II, p. 79.
[93] *Asiatic Annual Register for the years 1805–1811*, Journals published from London. Register for the Year 1779, London, 1801. Miscellaneous Tracts, pp. 121–22.
[94] Forster, vol. I, pp. 41–42. Forbes, vol. II, p. 142. Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, vol. I, pp. 87, 112–13.
[95] Mill, *History of British India*, vol. I, p. 131.
[96] Dubois, pp. 179–80. See also Forbes, vol. I, p. 256.

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punished with death, "because it was generally committed by low people". The Hindu criminal laws were highly preferential to the higher castes[97]. We are further informed that the members of the high privileged castes alone were entitled to perform the "*Upanayan*" and the sacred thread ceremonies. They were the twice-born, the distinguished part of society, the rest far inferior to them in social status[98].

VIII. Right-hand and left-hand castes

The social division of the non-Brahman castes into 'Right-Hand' (*Ballagai*), and 'Left-Hand' (*Eddagai*), sections was a peculiar feature of Hindu life in South India. The provenance of this rather odd social arrangement is lost in fables. Some scholars are of the opinion that it had its origin in the violent conversion of people from Buddhism to Hinduism in ancient times, or that it was an anti-Brahman movement directed towards reclaiming the lower strata to a higher social position. Others are of the opinion that it was of recent origin, and was introduced as a part of civil policy to divide the people and weaken their power[99]. Whatever be the truth, the division was a source of considerable strife, agitation, and violence in society during the period[100]. At the European settlements Fort St. David, Pondichery etc., disputes between the two sections frequently took place, and European authorities felt embarrassed in settling them to the satisfaction of both the parties[101]. It is interesting to study the social privileges claimed by the two sections in which all the different castes below Brahmans were ranged. Those of the 'right-hand' pretended that "they have the exclusive privilege of using twelve pillars in the *pandal*, or shed, under which their marriage ceremonies are performed, and their adversaries in their processions have no right to ride on horse-back, nor to carry a flag painted with the figure of Hanuman. The left-hand side pretend that all these privileges are confined to them by the grant of Kali on

[97] M. Elphinstone, *Report on the Territories conquered from the Peshwa*, Calcutta, 1821, pp. 53–54. See also remarks of Mill on Brahmans considered as popular "divinities" as powerful as Fire - something "transcendently divine". Mill, *History of British India*, vol. I, p. 130.

[98] Dubois, p. 24. *Eastern India*, vol. I, p. 207. Coleman, *Mythology of the Hindoos*, p. 155.

[99] *The Cyclopaedia of India*, Third Edition, vol. I, p. 601.

[100] Dubois, pp. 25–27. *Southern India*, vol.I, p. 250, vol. II, pp. 30, 250, 260, 269.

[101] Fort St. David consultations 1740. April 23, 24, 26, August, 29, 30. Also Letters from Fort St. George 1740 and Madras to Court. Sept. 12. H. D. *Love's Vestiges of Old Madras*, 3 vols. Madras, vol. II, pp. 142-43, 419–20. A. R. Pillai, *Diaries*, ed. by J. F. Price and H. H. Dodwell, 12 vols, Madras, 1904–1928, vol. I, pp. 177–78. He quotes the decree of the Supreme Council of Pondichery, 31st July exhibited at the courthouse on 13th August, 1741, declaring the social pretensions of the two contending groups as non-cognizable under European law.

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the Copper-plate . . .''[102]. This struggle between the groups for such distinctions was actively going on in the territories of the Mysore State and elsewhere in the eastern parts of the Peninsula. Their privileges were nowhere clearly defined and understood, and what is interesting is the fact that the very "low castes" were the most energetic partisans in the disputes pertaining to these[103]. Ives reports that at Madras, the Chettis, a rich merchant caste, ranking with the Leftists, were not permitted to be carried in their palanquins through the streets of the Rightists, "although many of the latter are only servants"[104]. When in the month of May, 1748, the Right-hand castes lodged a complaint against the conduct of the grandson of Cuddalere Kumarappa Chetti, a noted merchant of the French Company, in riding a white horse in a procession, we find Pillai explaining the position to Dupleix, the Governor of the settlement, that "only the right-hand castes may use a white horse, a white umbrella, white gown and white flag. The lefthand castes may not use them. This is the practice throughout the land"[105].

It is difficult to deny that social distinctions claimed by each group were "highly ridiculous", and caste psychology of the people certainly intensified the craze for them[106]. The French missionary observes that the attitude of the Brahmans and other castes not directly touched by the wrangles of the two parties was of splendid neutrality and remarks:

"The rights and privileges for which the Hindus are ready to fight such sanguinary battles appear highly ridiculous, especially to a European. Perhaps the sole cause of the contest is the right to wear slippers, or to ride through the streets in a palanquin or on horse-back during marriage festivals. Sometimes it is the privilege of being escorted on certain occasions by armed retainers, sometimes that of having a trumpet sounded in front of a procession, or of being accompanied by native musicians at public ceremonies . . . Such at any rate are a few of the privileges for which Hindus are ready to cut each others' throats"[107].

Buchanan reports that as a security measure against public peace being disturbed by such violent disputes, towns were partitioned into quarters where each party performed its ceremonies and did not carry its demonstrations into the quarters of the other party[108].

[102] *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 77–78.
[103] *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 77–78. Dubois, pp. 25–26.
[104] Ives, *Voyage*, p. 25.
[105] Pillai, *Diary*, vol. V, pp. 27–28.
[106] Dubois, pp. 26–27.
[107] Dubois, pp. 26–27.
[108] *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 250, vol. II, pp. 268–69. C. S. Srinivasachari gives a good account of the disputes between the Right and Left-Hand castes in Madras in the early part of the 18th century, pp. 68–76, vol. XII. Proceedings, Indian Historical Records Commission 1929.

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IX. The social disabilities of the depressed group

The most indefensible feature of caste was the social degradation of a large part of the population denominated untouchables, and who in South India, during the period, numbered according to Dubois about a quarter of the whole population[109]. In every society the lower classes have invariably suffered from social disabilities, but in India, caste as established in the 18th century did not permit the individual to grow out of them. In Indian society the social stigma of birth was irretrievable as Hindu law embodied in the Dharmashastras, apart from the caste-ridden social consciousness, was supposed to countenance it. Both caste and law conspired against the lower orders of society and kept them in social bondage in the worst form, as its helpless victims had no way out of it. It serves no material purpose to mention all the different castes included in this large depressed group of society in different localities. They were in general the nomad 'tribes' or castes engaged in professions connected with social sanitation and leather manufacture, professions considered very vile, polluting a man's whole life. These people also worked as "hired labourers" or slaves in the fields[110]. The social condition of the low castes in Bengal and South India bordered on acute distress and degeneration and certainly presents a contrast to their life in Northern India, Central India and the eastern parts of the U. P. The accounts of Malcolm for Central India, or Buchanan for eastern parts of the U. P. and Bihar, do not bear out that the lower castes were totally segregated or that villages had walled fortifications denying their ingress into the quarters of higher castes. The accounts for lower Bengal, Carnatic and Malabar point to their exclusion from all intercourse with the higher castes[111]. Dubois writes that social prejudices against them were most intense and "most strongly developed in the Southern and Western districts of the Peninsula"; that in the North they were "less apparent"[112]. The "Puliahs" in Malabar were considered no better than "beasts" and it is mentioned that if a Nayar, "who always carried arms, met one of those unhappy people on the road, he was entitled to stab him on the spot"[113]. Ives writing about them and the Niaddes in Malabar also observes, "If only the breath of one of them were accidently to come across a Nair, the latter would not fail undoubtedly to put him to death. To avoid this when they see a Nair coming towards them, they take care to get out of his way"[114]. Forbes, who was in Malabar as the Company's administrator, says that in Malabar, "the ignominious distinction of castes" was carried "to the utmost extent"

[109] Dubois, p. 51.

[110] Scrafton, *Reflections*, pp. 8–9. Ives, *Voyage*, pp. 25–26. Forbes, vol. I, pp. 202–03. Dubois, pp. 50–64. Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, vol. I, p. 86.

[111] *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 7, 20, 37, 55–56, 313–14, vol. II, pp. 410, 414–15, 482–83. Scrafton, *Reflections*, pp. 8–9.

[112] Dubois, p. 53.

[113] Dubois, p. 62, also *Southern India*, vol. II, p. 410.

[114] Ives, *Voyage*, p. 26.

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and he was convinced that the institution "puts a stop to the noblest exertions of real charity, blunts the finest feelings of humanity, and estranges man from man"[115]. The untouchables had no social status, no social rights, consequently no social ethics. Society tutored them to believe that their fate was "irrevocable", and that all men are not made "of the same clay". They had no consciousness of their importance in society and no urge for struggle to improve their lot[116]. All European accounts of the miseries and the filth of the lives of these people, Hallacharas, Chandalahs in Bengal, Pulias, Niaddes in Malabar, shoemakers, cobblers, chucklers, Pariahs, Chandalas, Muckwas, Pallers, Valluras in different parts of South India, certainly[117] recall to our mind Dante's description of hell, its fierce fires and smouldering ruins. Bacon characterizes such people by whom "the whole face of Hindustan is over-run" as "the ill-favoured dogs" of society[118].

Their social disabilities

Legally these classes had no civic status, no civic rights, and may be compared to the 'slaves' of Roman society with this difference, that the latter could become freemen, for Roman Law did not sanction permanent disabilities. In India, the low castes were the perpetual menial stock of society with freedom of movement severely curtailed, and without any claims to free citizenship. They could not claim independent property rights and in Malabar they were actually held as 'slaves' belonging to the feudal lord for whom they worked[119]. They could not participate even in public religious processions of other classes, and in South India their presence and foot-prints alone would defile the localities of Brahmans[120]. Dubois says that in Indian States, a Pariah for his audacity to enter a Brahman's house "might possibly be murdered on the spot", that a revolting crime of this sort "was actually perpetrated" "without a voice being raised in expostulation"[121]. Their admission into Hindu temples was altogether out of the question; they were also not entitled to the use of public utilities like wells[122]. Even professional

[115] Forbes, vol. I, p. 237. [116] Dubois, p. 51. Forbes, vol. II, p. 317.

[117] Scrafton, pp. 8–9. Ives, pp. 25–26. Dubois, pp. 6–16, 56–62, Forbes, vol. I, pp. 13–14, 202–203.

[118] T. Bacon, *Impressions and Studies in Hindostan*, 2 vols, London, 1837, vol. I, pp. 259–60.

[119] Dubois. In connection with the degraded condition of the low castes, Colebrooke quotes with approval the following statement from the Tantra Shastras:
"Avoid the touch of the Chandala, and other abject classes. Whoever associates with them undoubtedly falls from his class; whoever bathes or drinks in wells or pools which they have caused to be made, must be purified by the five productions of kine". *Asiatic Researches*, vol. V, p. 53.

[120] *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 20, 55–56.

[121] Dubois, p. 52.

[122] Ibid., pp. 8–16. Forbes, vol. I, pp. 202–203. Forster, *Journey*, footnote, p. 37, vol. I.

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"prostitutes" and slaves of other castes however low are said to have had no truck with them[123]. They were only patronized by Europeans for domestic service as people of other castes considered it degrading to seek service in their households[124]. Relegated to social contempt and opprobrium, it is not surprising if in their mode of life they did not share the decency and refinement of the rest of society[125]. A classification of the 'untouchables' which can be regarded as universal is, however, difficult to attempt. According to Dubois, they were the lowest among the Sudra community – those classes which performed "low and disgusting offices, which exposed them to frequent defilement". In the social scale artisan castes 'employed in mechanical and ornamental professions' and others of barbers, washermen, etc. rated above them and did not suffer from their disabilities[126]. The depressed castes, however, among themselves were not free from caste notions of superiority or inferiority. The Pallers mostly found round about Madura thought themselves superior to the Pariahs, as the former did not eat beef, while the latter prided themselves on being the "main support of the Right-hand divisions"[127].

X. Social trends influencing caste

1. Modification of the severity of caste

While society was too conservative to accept anything like a repudiation of caste, still it is not difficult to see that progressive trends were at work modifying its rigour. Under the Peshwas we have evidence that the rules of caste if violated were being leniently viewed in the award of punishments, provided the nature of the offence was not a violent deviation from the rules of caste relating to marriage and the sex-life of women in particular[128]. As early as 1721–22 we find that one Putaji Bir Mudhoji of the Maratha army was arrested by the Mughals at Surat, kept in confinement and 'polluted'. On his release his caste-men agreed to admit him back to the caste. He was just purified according to the rules laid down in the Shastras[129]. Readmission to caste except in very serious breaches was being sanctioned by the councils of castes and the Peshwas after the performance of certain 'penances'. The Raja of Satara could even override the decisions of these councils and order caste-men to dine with the accused to effect his complete restoration[130]. The selections from the diaries of the Maratha government cite many cases showing that the rules of caste relating to eating were being relaxed and the breaches were not viewed with alarm. The control of caste over the individual was however

[123] *Southern India*, vol. II, pp. 413–15, 482–83.
[124] Dubois, pp. 54–55.
[125] Ibid., pp. 56–61.
[126] Ibid., p. 63.
[127] Ibid., pp. 61–62, also *Southern India*, vol. II, p. 491.
[128] *Selections from Peshwa's Diaries*, vol. II, cases Nos. 103, 317.
[129] Ibid., vol. I, case No. 373.
[130] Ibid., vol. I, cases Nos. 384, 396, 399. Vol. II, case No. 101.

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great, and was being enforced by caste headmen or assemblies, with which we shall deal at length later. Here we shall take note of some other trends in connection with the institution in order to appreciate its dynamic character.

2. Assertion of lower classes

James Mill makes a very misleading observation on the lower strata of Hindu society. In his opinion, all agricultural and "productive classes" below the Vaisyas were "degraded below the brutes" and were considered vile and odious[131]. Wilson corrects him by pointing out that many of them held "quite as independent and respectable a position as they do in Europe" on "all the most important occasions of social life". The rules regarding marriage and dining were not such a hardship as they were imagined by Europeans. He further significantly points out that "let a blacksmith acquire wealth, and he will have his levee well attended by Brahmans of the most respectable descent"[132]. In the period under review we also see that caste as a standard of social importance, as determining rank, was in a state of flux and was being subjected to vital modifications. The lower castes, conscious of their importance in society, were certainly not complaisant about their status. They were asserting themselves and endeavouring to elevate their rank in the hierarchy of caste. They were certainly not renouncing caste but their assertion is perceptible as working in two directions; first pretensions to rank as high caste by claiming high ancestry and assuming high caste designations; secondly, imitation of the practices of the higher castes for securing higher social respectability. Some of the accounts for South India look as if there were a constant scramble for superiority amongst the various trading, artisan and cultivating castes at certain places. In northern Circars, the "Rachewars, Row-wars, and Velmas' were struggling for recognition as the "genuine offspring of the Chisteree or second class"; while the castes of husbandmen, cowherds, weavers and artisans endeavoured to rank along with Vaisyas[133]. From the account of Buchanan about different castes in Mysore it appears that the assertion of the lower castes was vigorous. The Lingayats and Pancham Banjigarus earnestly denied that they were Sudras and claimed higher eminence[134]. The Jotephandas, a caste of oil-makers, pretended to be of the Vaisya caste – a claim contested by the Bharis, who were mostly merchants, and by the Komatigas. The Komatigas proclaimed that they were "the only true Vaisya" and next in rank only to the Brahmans[135]. The Chitrakarus or painters claimed still higher eminence as Kshattriya[136]. The caste of potters had begun to put on the sacred thread and claimed supernatural powers which were ridiculed by the Brahmans[137]. At some places they were even challenging the

[131] Mill, *History of British India*, vol. I, p. 303.

[132] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 303–04 (footnote).

[133] *Minute by James Grant 1786. Fifth Report on India Affairs*, ed. by W. K. Firminger, Calcutta, 1918, vol. III, pp. 9–10. Also *British India Analysed*, vol. III, pp. 666–67.

[134] *Southern India*, vol. I, p. 236.

[135] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 252, 256, 258.

[136] Ibid., p. 256. [137] Ibid., pp. 274–74.

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Brahman monopoly of the Sanskrit language by repeating prayers in Sanskrit and abandoning customs like that of widow-remarriage[138]. The shoemakers at some places, particularly those who had migrated from the north, pretended to be of the Kshattriya caste[139]. The Vaishnavas, who were possibly aboriginals and had shot into prominence as worshippers of Vishnu, were endeavouring hard to establish a non-Sudra origin of the caste, but this attempt was being foiled by the Brahmans. They had, however, succeeded in having Brahman priests as their *gurus*[140]. The Ladarus, who followed different pursuits of trade in horses, cultivation etc. were assuming the title of the Kshattriyas of the "family of the sun" and wore the sacred thread. They were however treated as Sudras by others[141]. Pillai writes that Komatis on the eastern coast who followed the profession of trade claimed pure Vaisya descent[142]. These efforts of the lower classes do not appear to have been abortive. We observe that they were gradually winning over the Brahman priests to work for them[143]. At some places even the august status of the Brahmans was being challenged. The Panchalas or five artisan castes, Dubois writes, "refuse in some districts, to acknowledge Brahmin predominance"[144].

In Northern India also the tendency to assume high caste names and claim high ancestry was working actively in society. This was all the more so with primitive tribes which were gradually being reclaimed by Hinduism. In the district of Gorakhpur in U. P. several people of a mountain tribe called Khateri, "a spurious race", were claiming "all the dignities of the military order"[145]. In the district of Bhagalpur in Bihar, the "Kshetauris" engaged in cultivation and settled for a long time, pretended "to be of the military rank". In support of their claim they stated an interesting legend of their origin. They said that Parasram succeeded in destroying the Kshattriyas save two persons who fled for protection to Viswakarma, the god of the artists. The infuriated Parasram approached the god and demanded them back, but he was told that they were not Kshattriyas but "Kshetauris" or farmers. Thereafter they began to hold the plough and their descendents bore the name their god had given them[146]. In the areas adjacent to Shahabad in Bihar the Bhars, who were originally a low occupational caste, had actually assumed the designation of Pratihar Rajputs[147]. The Bhuimhars who were, in the opinion of Buchanan, "some low tribes" like Domkatars in the areas contiguous to Gorakhpur, had assumed the rank of Brahmans in Bihar. They had succeeded in securing a rank immediately below the proper Brahmans, "although they cannot receive

[138] Ibid., p. 395.
[139] Ibid., pp. 302–03.
[140] Ibid., p. 323.
[141] Ibid., p. 422:
[142] Pillai, *Diary*, vol. I, p. 119.
[143] *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 348–49, 350–51.
[144] Dubois, p. 23.
[145] *Eastern India*, vol. II, p. 456.
[146] Ibid., vol. II, p. 121.
[147] Ibid., vol. I, p. 468.

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Dana, nor perform any office of the priesthood". The Rajputs spoke of them "with great contempt" and denied them the title of Brahman "alleging that they were impure infidels" of the tribe of Domkatars[148]. In the district of Dinajpur in Bengal many persons pretended to be Brahmans assuming that they were descended from Vyas and consequently called themselves Vyasokta[149]. In May 1822, Major Hexley, Agent at Bhupal, reported an interesting fact about Bagris who had emigrated from Marwar to Malwa. They were notorious thieves and even ate the flesh of the cow. But they pretended to be Rajputs and their families had actually assumed the names of Rajput clans such as Rathor, Parmar, Bhatti, Hara, Chauhan etc.[150].

Similarly we observe that many lower castes were trying to renounce the various social practices associated with them – such as widow remarriage, indiscreet use of intoxicants, concubinage, non-vegetarian diet, "bloody religious ceremonies" etc. etc.[151] They were also usurping some of the high caste distinctions such as the right to wear the sacred thread with the avowed desire to rise in the social scale[152]. The social upsurge of the lower classes is also reflected in the religious life of the period, and of all reformist religious activity social reforms and the removal of invidious caste distinctions were the main plank.

3. Formation of new castes and sub-castes

Although the data on the subject is very poor, yet it is not difficult to see that the process of the fission of the old and formation of new castes was going on in society. About the middle of the 18th century, Robert Orme noted that castes had "many infinite sub-groups", and in his opinion there was "a singular disposition in the Indian, from very trifling circumstances to form a sect apart from the rest of his neighbours"[153]. Professional, sectarian and religious distinctions, as well as other social factors, were instrumental in splitting the old castes into separate units whose members in course of time would not inter-dine and inter-marry. In the province of Mysore, Pancham Banjigarus were being split into separate local and linguistic sub-groups, and a separatist tendency was strongly working within the Panchalas where each craft was forming itself into a distinct guild organization under a single chief. Likewise among the Madigarus, a low caste of leather-workers dressing hides and engaged in cultivation, the formation of closed matrimonial groups on an occupational basis is clearly visible[154]. Among Telinga Nabjigarus we find that the different sub-groups could eat together but there were no intermatrimonial relations, and the Chitrakarus were altogether cutting themselves off from their original stock by renouncing the use of liquors[155]. The Santa-

[148] Ibid., vol. II, pp. 453–54, also 463. [149] Ibid., p. 735.
[150] *Selections – Calcutta Gazettee*, vol. V, pp. 464–65.
[151] Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. II, pp. 27–28, 119–20, 329, 416, 528–29, vol.III, pp. 53, 95.
[152] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 274–75, vol. II, p. 268. Dubois, p. 24.
[153] Orme, *Military Transactions*, vol. I, pp. 4–5.
[154] Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 237, 250–51.
[155] Ibid., pp. 241, 254–55.

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namis were fast splitting into different sub-castes. Those who instructed the youth in literature and music considered themselves higher in status than those who officiated as priests in the temples[156]. The process of the splitting up of the old castes or multiplication of their sub-castes was active in northern India also. In the province of Bihar, the Brahman sub-castes are seen multiplying on the basis of professional differences. Those who lost their rank or were degraded formed a distinct, endogamous group. Such were the Agradanis who presided over funeral ceremonies, and Gangaputras "who frequent places of worship on the bank of the Ganges, but are shunned by pure persons, and live chiefly by deceiving strangers or low people, for whom they perform the ceremonies used in worshipping the holy stream"[157]. The Brahmans taking to agriculture and arms were forming a separate group of Zemindar Brahmans[158]. At Patna, according to Buchanan, the Gayawal or Gayapal Brahmans were "of a more recent formation" and were divided into fourteen *gotras*[159]. In the district of Purneah, many "tribes" of Sudras claimed to be of the 'Gaur nation' and were forming a large kin-group of Gaur Brahmins[160]. The same tendency was working in other castes. In Bihar, those Kayasthas who did not scruple "to smoke a pipe, to drink water, or chew betel-nut at the same table with an infidel" were degraded and they formed a distinct sub-caste[161]. At Rangpur, large numbers of a low tribe dealing in flowers and garlands and working as barbers concealed their real descent and assumed the title of 'kayasthas', forming a distinct, endogamous group[162].

The growth of altogether new castes was being encouraged by two factors primarily, social degradation and the assimilation of primitive tribes into the texture of Hindu society as distinct social groups. In Purneah, Buchanan says that in the terrible famine of 1770 many Hindus "unable to resist the cravings of appetite, ate food from impure hands, and lost caste". They and their descendants ultimately formed a separate caste, called "Suryuriya". They had priests and instructors of their own, followed the Hindu customs and abstained from beef. Cultivation was their profession[163]. In connection with the primitive tribes, he specifically mentions the names of two tribes.. The Kharwars in the district of Shahabad retained the features of the aboriginal tribes in the Vindhya mountains and could be easily distinguished from those of the Rajmahal hills. Those among them who owned landed estates and lived a pure, comfortable life, called themselves "Suryabangsis"; others continued to be a new low-caste bearing their tribal name[164]. Similar was the case with another aboriginal tribe, the Bhang-

[156] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 323–24.
[157] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. 1, p. 154.
[158] Ibid., p. 157.
[159] Ibid., vol. I, p. 155.
[160] Ibid., vol. III, p. 154.
[161] Ibid., vol. I, p. 163.
[162] Ibid., vol. III, p. 528.
[163] Ibid., vol. III, p. 162.
[164] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 492–93.

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giyas in Bihar, reclaimed as a distinct caste in the social structure[165]. It is not difficult to conclude that new castes and sub-castes were multiplying in society and the process was accelerated in the later period.

XI. Caste government

We have so far dealt only with the outward social forms of caste - its complex structure, its peculiar pharisaism upholding an intricate system of taboos regulating eating, sexual life and the general behaviour of people in society. Much requires to be noted regarding its internal government and the jurisdiction of caste councils and chiefs. Much of the work which in our day is done by the elaborate judiciary was done by caste itself. In this respect the vitality of caste polity in ensuring social control over the individual was remarkable. It was a comprehensive though unwritten code of social ethics, conventions, customs, usages and traditions, and the main support of the social fabric of the country[166]. While its deep hold over society made it static and stereotyped, it also acted as a proof against "pernicious innovations". Though its rigidity implanted in the Hindu mind a narrow community outlook and class consciousness, yet it gave him a sense of solidarity and disciplined his life. It had a firm hold on the popular mind as it preserved the people's traditions, kept alive the memories of their ancestry, and often held them together unbroken in spirit in periods of social crisis[167].

In its own interests the caste exercised close control over its members. As Dubois says: "The shame which would reflect on a whole caste if the fault of one of its individual members went unpunished, guarantees that the caste will exercise justice, defend its own honour, and keep all its members within the bounds of duty. For be it noted, every caste has its own laws and regulations, or rather we may say, its own customs, in accordance with which the severest justice is meted out, just as it was by the patriarchs of old"[168]. The control exercised by caste was also not without effect. Writing after 1820, Elphinstone points out that owing to active caste-control and public opinion, drunkenness was "almost unknown in the Mahratta country", which had "a decided superiority in morals" over the provinces held by the Company. "Public opinion, and above all the opinion of the Caste", according to him, "and the dread of expulsion, are the restraints on vices. These powers are in the Mahratta country in the hands of the whole caste. In the Carnatic there are regular Censors to each caste, called Gunnacharies, besides religious Gooroos invested with great power"[169]. On the Coromandal Coast, Munro Innes writes that even the very low castes could not think of deviating from rules

[165] Ibid., vol. I, p. 176.

[166] H. Risley, *The People of India*, 1916, p. 278. H. Cotton, *New India*, p. 252. Ramsay Macdonald, *The Awakening of India*, London 1910, p. 115.

[167] Dubois, pp. 28–29, 32–33, 46.

[168] Ibid., pp. 32–33.

[169] Elphinstone, op. cit., p. 74.

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and restrictions of caste as they were attended with "perpetual disgrace", "for a committee of his caste takes immediate cognizance of it, and if the fact be proved he is excommunicated for ever from their society and privileges"[170]. In Bengal also, the different castes had their councils, and according to Verelst "the authority of these courts enters into the concerns of common life, and is, consequently, very extensive"[171]. In other British Indian territories as late as the beginning of the 19th century we find the various castes having their councils or chiefs to adjudicate on caste questions and punish transgressions against their rules. Among the lower castes, in the north as well as the south, we find hereditary "chiefs" empowered with supreme caste authority[172]. Among the high castes usually elected representatives constituted councils in Bengal and Bihar. Many of these castes had their "Ghotaks" who maintained a register of marriages in the caste to ensure its purity. The members of one caste could, however, not be punished by another caste authority[173].

The State appears to have reserved to itself the right of annulling the decrees of caste-councils. The Raja of Satara often set aside the decrees of excommunication served on individuals by caste authority[174]. The East India Company acted on the principle that if a Hindu 'legally forfeited his caste' he could not be restored without the sanction of the Government as under the Muslim Government. The Parliamentary Committee of Secrecy (1773) was of the opinion that the practice was to be kept up "as a direct assertion of the subordination of the Hindoos, who are a very considerable majority of the subjects"[175]. The East India Company in Bengal maintained the Jatimala Kachahri for hearing and deciding cases relating to caste matters. Maharaja Nabkishen, the Dewan of Clive, had charge of it under Verelst, and Warren Hastings appointed his own Gomastahs – Krishto Kanto Das, a Teli by caste, and Ganga Govind Singh[176]. The sentence of excommunication, permanent exclusion from the caste, was the severest penalty the caste could pass against any of its members. In its social consequence it was more dreadful than it seems on the surface. Once a family was thus socially degraded nothing could materially restore it to its "pristine position"[177]. Verelst cites a case in which a

[170] M. Innes, *Narrative of Military Operations on the Coast of Coromandal*, London, 1780, p. 29.

[171] H. Verelst, *A View of the Rise, Progress and Present State of the English Government in Bengal*, London, 1772, pp. 27–28, footnotes.

[172] *Eastern India*, vol. I, p. 210, vol. II, pp. 139, 740, 757–58. *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 80–81, 237, 245, 273–74, 315, 320, 339, 347–48, 350–53, vol. II, pp. 26–28, 127- 29, 241, 244, 268, 329, vol. III, pp. 16, 22, 52, 184.

[173] *Eastern India;* vol. II, pp. 756–58, vol. III, pp. 565–66, 180.

[174] *Selections from Raja Satara and Peshwa's Diaries.*

[175] *Seventh Report*, pp. 326 -27.

[176] Forrest, *Selections from State Papers*, 1772–85, vol. II, p. 325.

[177] Dow, *Indostan*, vol. I, p. XXXIII. Dubois, pp. 46–47. Forbes, vol. I, p. 14. Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, vol. I, p. 86. S. C. Bose, *The Hindus as they are*, Calcutta, 1883 p. 167.

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Hindu who was guilty of bribery and was detected, was compelled "to swallow a spoonful of broth". "No sooner was his pollution known, he was degraded from his caste, lost all the benefits of society, and was avoided as a leper by his tribe". Lord Clive desired the Brahmans to consider if he could be restored to caste. After consultations they discovered a similar case mentioned in their books; "but although the Brahmans affected a compliance, the man was never restored to his caste". The Muslim governors, according to him, often extorted money from Hindus by holding out the threat of defilement[178]. During our period it was beyond the authority of caste to inflict the penalty of death, the usual penalties being fines, tortures, penances etc.[179]. In no case could individuals go scot free if their derelictions were detected[180]. Buchanan gives a list of crimes for which Brahmans of the Smartal sect in South India could be excommunicated:

1. Sexual intercourse within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity.
2. Sexual intercourse with any prohibited caste.
3. Eating forbidden food, or drinking intoxicating liquors.
4. Slaying any animal of the "cow-kind" or of the human species i. e. murder.
5. Eating in company of persons of another caste or food dressed by inferior castes.
6. Eating on the ship food dressed there.
7. Stealing.
8. Omitting to perform the "Shradh" ceremonies.

Smaller offences were punishable in other ways: fines, tortures, shaving the head, ordeals, fasts, pilgrimage etc., temporary separation from caste[181]. In the lower castes, adultery of a woman with one of another caste was often punished with excommunication[182]. It is instructive to reproduce a few cases from the diaries of the Peshwa's government to have an idea of the effectiveness of caste government. In 1744–45 a Gosain bewitched a Brahman and polluted him by dining with him. The Brahman later repented and was admitted within his caste after his caste-men had passed a decree in his favour[183]. In 1746–47 one Trimbakji Gurav married a woman named Bhiur by the "Muhurta" form of marriage and he overcame the objections of his caste people by securing a decree in his favour from the Raja of Satara[184]. The caste council imposed a fine on Santaji Shete for not fulfilling his promise of marrying his daughter to Jija Rib and directed him to fulfil it[185]. One Narkji Ghatge agreed to give his daughter in marriage to Ranoji Shinde. It was afterwards discovered that Ranoji was affected by leprosy. Narkji was permitted to withdraw the agreement and the Raja had to pass an order

[178] Verelst, *View*, p. 142.
[179] Dubois, pp. 32–37.
[180] Ibid.
[181] *Southern India*, vol. I, pp. 306–07.
[182] Ibid., vol. I, p. 249, vol. II, pp. 24–25, 27–28, 119, 269, vol. III, pp. 22, 53, 184.
[183] *Selections from Raja Satara and Peshwa's Diaries*, vol. I, case No. 384.
[184] Ibid., case No. 388.
[185] Ibid., case No. 391.

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that his caste-men were not to obstruct him[186]. About 1754–55 the widow of one Dewji Paratakoli was imprisoned on a charge of misconduct (adultery). Her caste-men agreed to take her back and requested the government that she should not be made a slave. The prayer of the caste-men was granted. Only a fine of Rs. 50/– was inflicted on her[187]. A son of Babaji Gurav of Oundh in Poona province had illicit intercourse with a Mahar woman. The whole family was excommunicated. The caste people later agreed to remove the ban and the government levied a tribute of Rs. 50/– from Babaji[188]. It is easy to cite many cases showing the strength of the caste polity in the 18th century. Its powers to inflict punishments on the defaulters from caste rules and order them to perform penances were respected by Indian governments.

XII. Influences of caste on Muslim society

The different classes of Muslim society although not mapped out sharply like Hindu castes were arranged in a scheme of social gradation upheld by birth. In Bengal and Bihar we come across two main social divisions in Muslim society; (1) 'Ashraf' or the high-born and (2) 'Razil', a corruption of Rizal "worthless" or low-born, somewhat similar to the Dwijas (twice-born castes) and Sudras of Hindu society. The lower social group denominated 'Razil' comprised the various professional, trading, agricultural and menial classes. The Ashrafs constituted the gentry or classes which claimed high extraction and are mentioned as having "abundance of pride". They included the Sheikhs and Saiyads, Mughals and Pathans corresponding to the Brahmans and Kshattriyas of Hindu society. They considered it disgraceful to do menial work and engage in lower professions, though this was not strictly possible under British rule the establishment of which resulted in a rapid decline of their fortunes[189]. In Southern India also the distinctions of high-born and low-born were current and the Muslims of Arabic extraction deemed themselves the noblest section of society[190]. The non-Ashraf section of the Islamic population was further arranged into four social divisions. In Bihar these were the "Bukals" or traders of low-birth who generally abstained from rural labour; the "Jyotiyas", the classes of agriculturists and field workers; the "Panniyas" or artisan classes. Below these were the low professions entailing social degradation. Buchanan gives a long list of about 38 classes excluded from social communion with the higher groups. They were the *jolahas*, *patwars* (tape weavers), *darji*, glassworkers (*churisaj*), *dephalis*, prostitutes, *bhats*, *bhatiyaras*, *bhanggera* (sellers of intoxicants), *halwais* (confectioners), barbers, sheep-butchers, potters, shoemakers, cutters, dyers, carpet weavers and other menial classes[191]. There is no evidence of

[186] Ibid., case No. 394. [187] Ibid., vol. II, case No. 101.
[188] Ibid., case No. 316.
[189] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 110–11, 144, vol. II, p. 407.
[190] Buchanan, *Southern India*, vol. II, pp. 421–22.
[191] *Eastern India*, vol. I, pp. 110–11, 145, 146.

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free social intercourse through marriage and dining among the different social groups. The democratic ideals of Islam had been successfully challenged and undermined by the reactionary influences of caste[192]. The Islamic social consciousness was strongly affected by 'caste psychology', particularly in those areas where the Hindus were the dominant group. The remarks of Buchanan about the district of Purneah in Bihar bear this out.

"In this district, especially where the proportion of Hindus is greatest the doctrine of caste has gained a complete practical ascendancy over the Muslims, and has occasioned a vast number of sub-divisions, the members of which do not intermarry, and often will not eat in company . . . In some places, for instance, almost every trade forms a separate caste as amongst the Hindus, while in others, it is only a few low trades that are excluded. In the former places, national distinctions are also a complete bar to intermarriage, but in others little attention is paid to this, and a person's descent in the male line is alone considered as of importance"[193].

Even among Muslims, who were mostly the descendants of foreigners, class consciousness on the basis of ancestry or place of origin was highly developed. The Sheikhs, Mughals, Pathans and Persians, were distributed into many small classes on the basis of ancestry and local origin[194]. The Muslim classes that were of Hindu stock retained caste in full vigour. Writing about Indian Muslims in Central India, Malcolm says:

"This class of half converts from the Hindu inhabitants of the country knows little more than the name of their professed faith"[195].

Mrs. Ali also informs us that in the respectable sections of Muslim society pride of birth was inculcated and formed an important feature of education. This was particularly so among the Sheikhs and Saiyads, who like the Brahmans were the "Lords" of Muslim society, were "peculiar objects of respect and favour" and were entitled to gifts and charities[196].

In the light of these accounts, it is not difficult to see that the entire Indian social structure was dominated by the institution of caste. It was the basis of social stratification not only among the Hindus but also among the Muslims, in spite of the fact that theoretically Islam as a social system is the very opposite of Hinduism.

[192] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 145–46.
[193] Martin, *Eastern India*, vol. III, p. 150.
[194] Ibid., vol. I, p. 145, vol. III, pp. 151–52.
[195] Malcolm, *Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 110–11.
[196] M. H. Ali, *Observations on the Mussalmans of India*, 2 vols, London, 1832, vol. I, pp. 6–7.

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Mountstuart Elphinstone: His Training, Method and Intellectual System

V. N. Datta

I.

Dr. K. M. Ashraf's conversation which was generally brilliant turned mostly to political and historical subjects when his friends visited him. I remember one of those many evenings – I think it was a November evening in 1958, when, with his usual erudition, clarity and ardour, Dr. Ashraf set forth his views in his pleasant, sonorous voice on some vital problems of Medieval Indian History: Amir Khusro's intellectual outlook and Delhi as a seat of culture. In the course of discussion, Mountstuart Elphinstone came up and Dr. Ashraf remarked that in spite of recent researches and investigations on the Medieval period of Indian History, Elphinstone's history remained in some of its portions a definitive work; he suggested that it might be desirable to study the historical ideas of Elphinstone and frame, if possible, an outline of his intellectual system. The following article is an attempt to carry out the wishes of my dear and kind friend who is no more, and whose unfailing courtesy, gracious smile and goodheartedness I will ever miss in life.

Elphinstone was an omnivorous reader, at home with many authors and many centuries. On his 22nd birthday which fell on October 6, 1801, he gives in his Journals a formidable list[1] of books that he read during a period of one year and which is a curious record of the desultory character of his reading, perhaps unavoidable in a wandering life. This list included a large number of historical, political, philosophical and poetical works ranging from the *Odyssey* and Herodotus to Berkeley's *Dialogue on Natural Religion*. The Ancient classics – Homer, Virgil, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Tacitus, Plutarch, Demosthenes and Cicero; the Persian poets like Rudaki, Rumi, Saadi and Hafiz, and modern writers like Milton, Gibbon, Hume and Bentham[2] were his favourite authors. The range of his reading was wide and the nature of his studies mostly diversified, not designed with any definite purpose of specialization in a narrow field. Education comprised for him, as it did for others who shared the later 18th and early 19th century outlook, the study largely of classical literature. Throughout his stay of about thirty-one years in India, reading remained with him almost a passion and

[1] T. E. Colebrooke, *Life of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone*. London, 1884, vol. I, p. 31.

[2] Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*, vol. II. p. 51 "At first Elphinstone was critical of Bentham, but later he changed his irreverent notions of Bentham for great respect and admiration".

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he divided his time between his private study and his official work; sometimes one impinged upon the other and while engaged in his official work, it was not uncommon with him to think of the pleasures of reading. In his early twenties he was able to find more time for his studies but subsequently due to the strict and conscientious attention to his growing public duties, travelling and dissipation of which he complained more than once, the range of his reading suffered a set-back and on February 7, 1812, he recorded, "I have spent the bulk of my time in a sort of business which does not tend to qualify me for an author, or in travelling, dissipation, or idleness. My times of study have been only specks on this dull mass"[3].

Often Elphinstone would comment on the particular work he was reading in his Journals; for example, he described Byron's *Child Harold* as exquisite blue-devilage[4] and the *Paradise Regained* as inferior to *Paradise Lost*[5]. He thought Volney's *Travels in Syria and Egypt* the best book of travel[6]. He indulged in the curious habit of classifying the English poets according to their merit. To the first class belonged Shakespeare and Milton and to the second class, Spencer and Dryden (or Dryden or Spencer). But where should he place Byron[7]? Sometimes he would trace a maxim and discuss it; as for example, he examined Addison's statement "It is the ambition of men to be esteemed and of women to be loved"[8]. A larger portion of notes in his journals were made on works of imagination. Babur, whom he regarded as the most illustrious person that ever flourished in Asia, fascinated him for his good heart[9]. His observations and comments in his Journals are lively and just and reveal his plenitude of erudition rather than precise solidity of criticism.

Elphinstone was not a scholar of the library but combined through life that rare quality, the love of books and sports. At times he rode forty or fifty miles a day, went hunting, killed a bear or a sow or exercised with the sword or shot fires[10], and on return to his tent he would reflect on Herodotus[11]. When he was sixteen years of age General Wellesley had told him during the campaign of Assaye in 1803 in the Maratha war, that he had mistaken his profession and that he might have been a soldier[12]. Scenic beauty lifted him to the pitch of exultation and ro-

[3] Ibid., vol. I, p. 245.
[4] Ibid., p. 345.
[5] Ibid., p. 280.
[6] Ibid., p. 236.
[7] Ibid., vol. II, p. 148.
[8] Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*, vol. I, p. 272.
[9] Ibid., vol. I, p. 261.
[10] Macaulay read in India beyond his capacity and denied himself the benefit of gaining personal experience. In his recollections, he wrote, "It is hardly worth my while to learn management of firearms at this time of day. I never loaded a pistol and scarcely ever fired one". T. B. Macaulay, *Journals* (Trinity College Library, Cambridge), vol. II, p. 41 (28. Sept., 1856).
[11] Colebrooke, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 44, 45, 354.
[12] Ibid, p. 4.

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mantic poetry, especially that of Byron, sent him musing. The snow-capped majestic mountains of the Himalayas[13] inspired him and he found in them silence, antiquity and depth. He thought that men changed but that the hills ever remained the same. He had longed to see the Egyptian pyramids. The memory of the past saddened him and the stray, lonely pieces of buildings – a broken tower or a pre-historic arrangement of big stones, haunted him and created in him a melancholy interest about their former possessors[14]. He was greatly struck by Akbar's fort at Agra[15] and admired in it particularly the Moti Masjid, but was disappointed with the Taj. About the rulers of Bijapur he wrote, "our admiration of their grandeur is heightened by our compassion for their fall"[16].

Through his Journal[17] and graphic letters, which in a way are written in a more animated style than his historical works precisely because of the difference in the theme and nature of the work, Elphinstone emerges as a man of introspective disposition, absorbed in self-examination, overtaken by imaginary fears about his future, seized with nostalgia for his home overseas, conscious of his mediocrity and obscurity[18], which he often complained about, and determined in cooler moments to overcome these moods of depression and to throw himself into great work of public importance[19]. At times he debated with himself on questions connected with his personal life: how to acquire the art of vivacity, how to be a lively conversationalist and how to improve his compositions.

Once while reading the review of a novel the idea came to Elphinstone to give up the habit of taking snuff[20], which he determined to leave off on July 18, 1813. He decided not to mention this fact to anyone at least for a week, and during the following twelve months the entries in the Journal conclude regularly with the mysterious words 'Resolutions Safe'. He indulged in the habit of day-dreaming which mixed with and impeded business and reflection, and he thought that nothing of consequence could be well done or conceived without undivided attention. He wrote in his Journal "My own world - which ought not to exist if it does not yield great delight – is overhung with gloom, peopled with dismal phantoms"[21]. But he hoped that those habits of giving way to the imagination could be made more useful by concentrating on some great object in life: active employment, knowledge, journeys, wars, applause for zeal and energy[22]. He asked himself, "Why not fire the imagination with the pleasure and profit of rational studies – Greek

[13] Ibid., p. 336.
[14] Ibid., vol. II. p. 70.
[15] Ibid., vol. II, p. 184.
[16] Ibid., vol. II, p. 70.
[17] This Journal comes from his private papers. It would be interesting to know for what purpose he kept it. Though very precise, it is also extremely discreet.
[18] Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*, vol. I, p. 352.
[19] Ibid., p. 353.
[20] Ibid., vol. I, p. 271.
[21] Ibid., p. 352.
[22] Ibid., pp. 352–353.

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or Philosophy? Or with some attainable design, such as the final settlement of India"[23]. It was a cardinal point with him to think about himself (though he tried to think less about himself), to register the state of his mind, to look forward to his opportunities and backward to estimate his successes and failures. He was experimenting upon himself and making efforts to cultivate his mind, to discipline his passions, to refine his sensibilities and to extend the range of his knowledge. In a sense, he was a Renaissance man who hankered after one moment of real glory. A Clive or a Coote could win trophies of glory on the battlefield but the chance of great events occuring in his days was not considerable and the times required not so much their dashing prowess but the difficult though slow process of 'cut and clip'[24] in the administrative system. In moments of depression he would reflect on the meaning of life and on such occasions Herodotus' proverb *οὐ φροντὶς Ἱπποκλείδῃ*[25], which he thought contained the essence of all philosophy and wisdom, would recur in his Journals.

II

Elphinstone did not theorize on history nor did he explain his conception of it, but the kind of comments and criticisms that he offered on historical works especially in his letters to John Malcolm (the author of the *History of Persia*), William Erskine (who was completing the translation of the memoirs of Emperor Babur), Grant Duff (who was engaged in completing his *History of the Marathas*), and James Tod (who was working on his *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*) indicate the things he holds necessary for an historian. Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Tacitus, Giuccardine, Gibbon and Hume were his favourite historians. He admired Herodotus for his observations and Tacitus for his philosophical reflections. Gibbon's memoir kindled his interest in historical works. He believed that Orme in his descriptions of India was "constantly in the right". He came to see that accuracy of facts, condensed and animated style, sparkling and profound reflections on facts and lively pictures of countries and characters[26] were principal ingredients in a sound historical work. An historian while writing history should adopt a flexible attitude towards it and not regard history as an exact science. Though the object of an historian was to explain facts and situations, Elphinstone recognized that in certain cases, due to the paucity of facts or the non-availability of material, it was not possible to explain the phenomena and in such cases, an historian should qualify his statements by using such words as "perhaps" or "in all probability". This was the advice he offered to Grant Duff for saving himself from the besetting sin of certainty and dogmatism but Elphinstone cautioned him not to carry it too far. His attack on Hume for the Whig bias[27] from which his work suffered indicates his predilections for a just appraisal of issues, untinctured

[23] Ibid.
[24] Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*. vol. I, p. 355.
[25] "What cares Hippoclides". Herodot VI 129.
[26] Colebrooke, op. cit., vol. I, p. 260.
[27] Colebrooke, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 176–77.

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by a trace of party fervour. The basis of history was factology and the fuller the facts, the more adequate the work. He corrected Malcolm by pointing out to him that Peshawar contained 100,000 inhabitants and not 10,000 as had been stated by Malcolm in his *History of Persia*. He laid a special emphasis on a sense of proportion to be maintained in the estimate of personalities and events; for example, he regretted that in historical works, barring Dow's *Indostan*, as little was said about Babur as if he had reigned at Timbuktu[28]. He believed that certain words had definite historical connotations which required for clarity adequate explanations. One such word was "camp". Elphinstone wrote to Duff, "Camp presents to a European the idea of long lines of white tents in the trimmest order. To a Mahratta it presents an assemblage of every sort of covering, of every shape and colour, spreading for miles in all directions, over hill and dale, mixed up with tents, flags, trees and buildings when Suntajee or Dhunuajee starts up at the head of 20,000 men, it occurs to me, perhaps erroneously, that they are the débris of the armies of Bijapoor and Golconda, the old followers of Sivajee and Sumbajee, the gangs of Daishmookhs and Poligars who sprung up in the decline of the Dekhan monarchies and finally the citizens and peasants who were driven by tyranny and spoliation to practise the crimes by which they had suffered; but unless you give some account of this they will seem to a stranger to have started up from the earth"[29].

Like a researcher Elphinstone was interested in the origin of things[30]; for example, he wished to elucidate the history of that class called "Zemindars" and traced it farther back to the times of Akbar; he was interested in tracking down the historical sources on the feudal system of the Rajputs – the problem which still agitates the minds of some of the leading historians – and he wanted to expose fallacies, like the one that the whole of India had belonged to Porus. He had wished to estimate the changes in Indian public opinion under the impact of British rule. He had wanted to find the clue to the fact that though the Muslims had lived as rulers for centuries, how was it that they could leave nine-tenths of the nation unconverted. But the most fascinating subject for him was to trace the "progress of improvement and of liberal ideas" among the peoples of India. Some of these problems which interested Elphinstone more than a century ago are directly relevant to the labours of any student today who desires to make a critical study of the history of India. Elphinstone was charmed by the exquisite portraits of Babur which were reminiscent of Chaucer's pilgrims. Bernier struck him as a model of the art of mixing history with travels, which was required in recording the transactions of a distant nation[31]. Elphinstone insisted that eventually an historian had to judge, and that in no case was it desirable for him to lessen the distance between right and wrong[32]; and in his judgements an his-

[28] Ibid., vol. I, pp. 260–61.
[29] Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*, vol. II, p. 137.
[30] Ibid., p. 348.
[31] Ibid., vol. II, p. 136.
[32] Ibid., vol. I, p. 323.

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torian was to recognize the other side of the medal and thus was to exercise imaginative sympathy, the art of putting oneself in the place of another man.

It can perhaps be maintained that Elphinstone's historical outlook accepted some of the following basic assumptions as a theoretician. History to him was an accurate and authentic narrative of the past. It must state facts; the body of facts is based on evidence, and evidence is properly assessed, scrutinized and carefully marshalled and results produced by a judicious restraint of feelings and discrimination. Evidence must be large enough to supply relevant material on the subject. There can be no finality about history which in a sense is an interim report in which there is scope for conjecture and speculation. History was not mere industrious collection and arrangement of facts but a "picturesque narrative" in a pleasant form. This view of history being an imaginative construction of the past had been shared by Hume and Macaulay who were eloquent, glowing, almost poetical, and excited the feelings of their readers. In the final analysis, history for Elphinstone was a judgement on men and a statement of events, though he would not accept the reduction of all history to personal biography. This view of history is rootet in empiricism and in the ideas of enlightenment and neglects the study of institutions, especially of social and economic structures.

III

When he was about 35 years old, in 1814, Elphinstone completed his three volumes on 'Cabul' which were based on his official reports and in which the original materials were entirely recast. The information regarding the country was mainly gathered from natives of Afghanistan after the mission had left the country and under considerable difficulties, and he had been urged to venture on the publication of this work by Sir James Mackintosh, whose persuasions carried weight with Elphinstone. The account of the Afghan tribes was meagre but it contained valuable information on countries then but little known. The general reader is likely to be oppressed with such numerous and minute details on so remote a people.

In 1816, when he was about 37 years of age, Elphinstone thought of writing the history of the Maratha Empire and he drew up its plan, and both the idea of writing such a work and the plan were taken over by Grant Duff who utilized them to his advantage. In 1820 he thought that he should write a long work on the history of India which might "hold out a reasonable prospect of reputation"[33]. By then, in 1819, James Mill's big work on the *History of British India* had appeared, which, defying the empirical limitations of time and space, reflected the applications of the Benthamite principles of utility to a civil society separated by long distance and a different set of values. Mill's work had gained reputation in India House among the band of rising civil servants and academic circles in England. Without denying the merits of Mill's detailed work , particularly in the analysis of Clive and Warren Hastings, Elphinstone felt that Mill's history suffered from a want of a

[33] Ibid., vol. II, p. 117.

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personal knowledge of the country and of the languages of the country, Persian and Hindustani. He held the view that Mill's sarcastic and cynical tone had done damage to the theme of the British power in India[34]. In his preface to the *History of British India*, Elphinstone remarked "But the Excellence of Histories derived from European researches alone has not set aside the utility of similar inquiries conducted under the guidance of impressions received in India; which as they arise from a separate source, may sometime lead to different conclusions"[35].

Of Elphinstone's equipment as a historian there can be no two opinions. He had local knowledge of India, where he stayed for more than thirty years, and had mixed with Indians and travelled widely, had learnt Persian and Hindustani and had consulted original Persian manuscripts, had devoted himself to questions connected with the language and literature of India and was an occasional contributor to the *Transactions* of the Literary Society of Bombay, had held positions of great responsibility in Western India, first as Resident at Poona, had produced marvellous official minutes on social and educational problems which reflected no trace of bias and showed penetration into and sympathetic understanding of India, had withstood innovations and new-fangled theories, had visited historical places which filled him with reflections and a sense of wonder, had seen before him the rise and fall of dynasties, and had participated in the process of the consolidation of British rule in India. In addition he was a foreigner, for whom, though perhaps devoid of an instinctive understanding of local institutions, the possibilities of exercising detachment were greater than those of a local historian.

In 1827, when he was 48 years of age, he left for England, and, though he was offered the Governor–Generalship of India, he stayed in England until his death in 1859. During these thirty-two years he published a volume of *The History of India (The Hindu and Muhammadan Periods)* and another volume on the *Rise of British Power in the East* closing with the grant of the Diwani. His friends pursuaded him to continue his work on the British period, in spite of his deteriorating health. He could not sit while working on his historical material. But his health is not really the crucial factor for the disruption of his work on the British period of Indian history. It becomes clear from his Journals that while he was writing on the British period, he was comparing and collating his findings with those of Mill, and though he was providing fuller information on details, yet in the ultimate analysis of events and characters his views approximated to Mill's version. He could not vindicate Clive and in this his estimate of Clive agreed with that of Mill. He hoped that Warren Hastings' government might give a prospect of throwing new light, but he found, much to his disappointment, that in this field there was no prospect of such a difference of opinion with Mill. It must be realized that Elphin-

[34] Elphinstone made illuminating remarks on the work of Mill. He thought that Mill showed want of sympathy and was a controversialist more anxious to demolish the view of others than to present fruitful results of his researches. Above all, he was a partisan, a Benthamite propagandist. See Colebrooke, *Elphinstone*, vol. II, pp. 353–355.

[35] Mountstuart Elphinstone, *The History of India*. London, 1874, p. IX.

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stone was working within the narrow limits within which historians operated. He began to be filled with a sense of futility in pursuing the work which he thought could not in any sense be an original contribution and while he was torn by this conflict, Macaulay's dazzling essays on Clive and Warren Hastings appeared, which struck a final blow to his ambition of writing a history of British rule. These essays, though showing how Macaulay was misinformed in places, could not really be controverted and Elphinstone felt his incapacity to write narrative history like Macaulay. Eventually he abandoned the idea of completing his History of the British period and what remains with us are some striking and illuminating reflections on Clive and Warren Hastings in a fragmentary form. Historical research has been deprived of a major contribution on the British rule in India by one who showed the intellectual honesty of a scholar in the realization that it was not worth while pursuing an historical work if it did not make an original contribution to historical knowledge, or if it did not at any rate produce certain basic displacements in the accepted notions about a particular period in history. Perhaps he was too modest to be confident.

Elphinstone's *History of India* (*The Hindu and Muhammadan Periods*) was published in 1841. Its sixth edition with notes and additions by E. B. Cowell has twelve chapters and covers 772 pages of which 299 pages are devoted to the Ancient period and 450 pages to Medieval India. On Hindu civilization which covers 224 pages, Elphinstone follows Mill's pattern of studying Hindu institutions, classifying them into separate compartments and providing elaborate details on each of these items. A comparative study of the texts of Mill and Elphinstone would doubtless reveal divergences in treatment and emphasis. While Mill had condemned the Hindu form of Government, administration of justice and the principle titles of law[36], Elphinstone showed that those institutions represented an advanced stage of civilization[37]. Mill had produced the thesis that the state of Hindu arts, with the exception of weaving, was low[38] and that the fine arts were entirely without a knowledge of perspective[39], Elphinstone showed that the arts of life, though still in a simple state, were far from being in a rude state[40].

Mill had described the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as grotesque productions[41], but Elphinstone thought that these works contained many spirited and poetical passages[42]. According to Mill, the astronomical and mathematical sciences had been cultivated exclusively for the purpose of astrology, one of the most irrational of all imaginable pursuits[43], but Elphinstone recognized that the Hindus excelled their contemporaries in their original contributions in Algebra. Furthermore,

[36] J. Mill. *The History of British India*. vol. I, pp. 203–22, 227.
[37] Elphinstone, *The History of India*. pp. 20–29.
[38] Mill, *British India*. vol. II, p. 3.
[39] Ibid., p. 39.
[40] Elphinstone, *History*, p. 51.
[41] Mill, *History*, vol. II, p. 69.
[42] Elphinstone, *History*, p. 171.
[43] Mill, *History*, vol. II, p. 150.

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Elphinstone believed that Hindus were distinguished in arithmetic by the acknowledged invention of the decimal notation[44]. He held that the institution of caste, though it exercised a most pernicious influence in the progress of the nation, had by no means so great an effect in obstructing the enterprise of individuals as European writers were apt to suppose[45]. In the delineation of Hindus he was not oblivious to notable virtues which they possessed, as for example, absence of drunkenness and immodesty among them[46], but Mill had shed hostile light on the Hindus[47]. In Mill's work, the history of the Hindu period covered 5 pages only[48] whereas Elphinstone devoted 21 pages which were followed by valuable and fairly detailed sections on changes in caste[49], Greek accounts of India[50] and notes on the revenue system[51]. On the religion of the Hindus, Elphinstone gave a more detailed, systematized and appreciative account than that of Mill[52].

On the Ancient period Elphinstone's history is based on the works of Colebrooke and Wilson, Dr. Hamilton, Buchanan's *Journey through the Mysore*, Ward's *Hindoos*, Tod's *Rajasthan*, Malcolm's *Central India*, Kennedy's *Researches in he Hindu Mythology*, the *Asiatic Researches* and the *Transactions* of the Royal Asiatic Society, besides the ancient Hindu texts. In his account, Elphinstone has eschewed facts from mythology and has given a concrete and substantial account of Hindu civilization; he does not judge the state of Hindu society by Western standards, but studies it against the conditioning circumstances. According to Mill, Hindu society was static but Elphinstone noted the processes of change that occurred in Hindu society. Elphinstone offered explanations and details and admired the antiquity and vitality of Hindu civilization in some of its features, and his whole text does not suffer from any trace of pre-conceived notions which figure prominently in the works of Mill.

The medieval portion of Elphinstone's *History* is primarily a study of political history dealing with kings and personalities and scant attention has been paid to cultural, social and economic activities. Only one chapter of 12 pages is devoted to the internal state of India. Elphinstone follows Ferishta whose English translation by Briggs had appeared in 1829 under the title *Rise of Muhammadan Power in India*. Other works consulted are Lee's *Ibn Batuta*, Dorn's *History of the Afghans*, Bird's *History of Guzerat*, *Malfuzat-i-Timuri* (translated by Major Price), Babur's *Memoirs* (translated by Erskine), Price's *Memoir of Jehangir*, Scott's *Iradit Khan*, Stewart's *History of Bengal* and Forster's *Travels*. In spite of his proficiency in Persian, he did not utilize the original Persian sources and depended on English translations, perhaps largely due to convenience.

[44] Elphinstone, *History*, pp. 142, 145.
[45] Ibid., p. 61.
[46] Ibid., pp. 217, 194, 221.
[47] Mill, *History*, vol. I, pp. 437–492. See Elphinstone, *History*, pp. 187–224.
[48] Mill, *History*, II, pp. 236–240.
[49] Elphinstone, *History*, pp. 250–253.
[50] Ibid., pp. 253–266. [51] Ibid., pp. 270–275.
[52] Ibid., pp. 329–436.

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One may find factual inaccuracies in Elphinstone's *History*; for example, Prithvi Raj and Jai Chand are described as the grandsons of the Rajas of Delhi[53]; Iltutmish is mentioned as Governor of Bihar before his accession whereas he was Governor of Badaun[54]; Nasir-ud-Din is shown as the grandson of Iltutmish while he was in reality the son of Iltutmish. Elphinstone's portraits of the character of races and peoples are vivid and striking[55] and are partially valid even today. Elphinstone is a portrayer of characters and his exquisite characters like Babur, the Rajputs and the Marathas assume reality and complexity. His style is charming, flowing, lucid and graceful, the inferences and reflections he makes are sagacious and appropriate, and in view of the "picturesque narrative"[56] that his *History* presents, it is not possible to accept the view that his work "lacks the intensity of spirit and the animation of personality which alone can transform historical composition into historical literature"[57]. Elphinstone's *History* has been described as "not a powerful competitor"[58]. On the contrary, against Mill's *History*, Elphinstone's work covers a wider range, is more concrete in details, more rich in local knowledge, far more illuminating on the character of races and historical personages, and above all, it exercises a sympathetic comprehension of a distant nation, its institutions and ways of life. Elphinstone thus proved himself superior to that system of prejudice which was then universal and which was never completely dissipated in the works of British historians.

Elphinstone's "*Rise of British Power in the East*", a valuable introduction to the history of Modern India, deals with the voyages and conquests of the Portuguese and their decline, the coming in of the English and of the French and their conflicts between themselves and with the local powers, the eventual victory of the British over their rivals, and finally the grant of Diwani in 1765. Elphinstone had commenced some further chapters on the early relations of the British government with the Marathas, on the affairs of the Rohillas, and on Hastings' treatment of the Raja of Benares, but they are mere fragments.

Elphinstone's *Rise of British Power* is divided into ten chapters and describes the early phase of the British rule when the European powers were engaged in gaining a commercial and political foothold on the soil of India. In the process there was displayed much heroism, ambition, show of power, toil, intrigue, fraud and chicanery. He describes the system of corruption and mentions in particular the sum of £ 1000 which had been accepted as a bribe by the Speaker of the House of Commons[59]. In this work, Elphinstone kept up with the scholarship of the time

[53] Elphinstone, *History*, p. 363.
[54] Ibid., p. 371.
[55] Ibid., pp. 303, 361, 372, 615.
[56] Ibid., p. 52 on general remarks; pp. 166–170 on literature; p. 199 on the Himalayas; p. 217 on the character of the Hindus; pp. 438–440 on Babur; p. 548 on Akbar.
[57] C. H. Philips, *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*. London, 1961, p. 225.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Elphinstone, The *Rise of British Power in the East*, London, 1887, p. 68.

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and his text which dealt intensively with the period between 1758–1765 was based on the authoritative sources distinguished for their veracity and exactness. He was discriminating in the use of his sources; for example, he condemned Hamilton for his credulous disposition and admired Orme as a reliable guide[60].

Elphinstone's work suffers from some factual inaccuracies; for example, Albuquerque expired on 16th December, 1515 and not in December 1514 as stated in the text[61]; Sir Josiah Child and Sir John Child are shown as brothers[62], which they were not; and Zamorin was a hereditary title rather than a corrupted form of Tamori[63]; but in the sweep of his judgements on Dupleix[64], Sirāj-ud-Daula[65], the Black Hole[66], the role of Omi Chand[67], Clive and Warren Hastings, Elphinstone is sound, just, candid and showed judicious restraint in the portrait of these complex characters. He was anxious to the extreme limit of conscience not to load the dice in favour of his own side[68]. In his analysis of the British rule there is neither any gloating over the victories of the British nor a tone of apology for the acts of cruelty perpetrated. His characters are brushed in convincingly with touches of suggestiveness and his work is entirely free from any tendency to sensationalism. His *Rise of British Power* is a candid, patient and connected narrative and in respect of its minuteness and accuracy of details is practically a notable experiment[69]. He thus wrote that kind of history which asserts only what the evidence compels one to assert – history as the laying out of a story on which all men can form what judgements they like when they have read it.

[60] Ibid., p. 53 (footnote), and p. 81.
[61] Elphinstone, *Rise of British Power*, p. 20.
[62] Ibid., p. 52.
[63] Ibid., p. 5.
[64] Ibid., pp. 226–227.
[65] Ibid., p. 264.
[66] Ibid., pp. 274–275.
[67] Ibid., p. 303.
[68] Ibid., p. 359. See Removal of Mīr Jāfar and the accession of Mīr Kasīm.
[69] Ibid., pp. 49, 102, 114. See military details.

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India and Internationalism: A Note on the Early Working Class Movement

P. M. KEMP-ASHRAF

K. M. Ashraf was a student in England during one of the worst periods of mass poverty, unemployment and deepening crisis. With restricted means and few friends outside Indian circles, he sometimes described his own life at London as "drab" – like the lives of millions in the depression.

The General Strike had left behind it disillusionment, divisions, decline in trade union membership, treachery among Labour leaders – experiences that perhaps contributed to misconceptions about the rôle of "labourism" in history. But there was also among the immediate rank-and-file victims a growing will to fight the reaction. One symptom was the spread of Communist influence. The ignominious end of the second Labour Government was followed by Invergordon and the third National Hunger March. These signs too were not without their effect on intellectuals.

The 1925 Scarborough TUC had reaffirmed international solidarity. The Chairman of the General Council at that time, A. B. Swales, took the issue of the day beyond local grievances. "All around us are signs of awakening consciousness in the people of all countries that the present system of society is condemned . . . It is the duty of all members of the working class so to solidify their movements, that . . . we shall be wanting neither in machinery nor men to move forward to the destruction of wage slaves and the construction of a society based upon co-ordinated effort and world-wide mutual good will and understanding."[1] Congress resolutions included the condemnation of empire as exploitation and supported the rights of subject peoples to unconditional self-determination. The second Labour Government, therefore, could scarcely have done less than give the first official promise of limited self-government to India. The Round Table Conference which had great effect on Ashraf's estimate of the future, ensured delay and helped to obscure any historical connection with the industrial struggle.

Yet in those years there were also signs of a firmer connection between proletarian and colonial freedom that were particularly associated with India; for instance, in the person of Saklatvala, the Indian communist elected in a working

[1] Quoted from: J. B. Jefferys, *The Story of the Engineers 1800–1945*, London, 1945, p. 231. But cf. G. D. H. Cole, *A Short History of the British Working Class Movement*, London, 1960, p. 425, for a typical verdict of the General Strike and avoidance of any wider perspective that raised morale at the time.

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class constituency to Parliament and imprisoned for his speech on the historic May Day of 1926; or in the League against Imperialism; or the long-drawn-out Meerut trial. As a result of the awakening in India itself there was in general, of course, a far greater public awareness of India's claims than ever before, although Ashraf, like most Indians at that time, considered it to be limited to an undifferentiated, ineffectual and misdirected moral sympathy, as indeed it often was.

K. M. Ashraf had outgrown his earlier romantic patriotism, what he called "Muslim politics", and any merely negative line of anti-British agitation. In these years he turned towards communism. He now had opportunities to inform himself about the Soviet Union denied to people in India. He found inspiration in the October Revolution and concrete example in the social reconstruction in Soviet Asia. Ashraf's expression "nationalist communist"[2] recalls his own path of development but also contains the recognition that the re-orientation of the national movement was indeed a task to which history had called his generation. This aim was clear to him before he left England. He understood it to mean in practice the widest possible anti-imperialist unity within India, actively involving workers and peasants, to overthrow British rule; and that is how he spoke of the matter in 1931–32.

Unable to pay for the cheapest cargo-boat passage, Ashraf returned to India burdened with a debt to be claimed by the government from his first salary (when, if ever, he found employment) and in great doubt and uncertainty as to his personal future generally. But he was satisfied that he had solved other, more important problems. Although it was not actually his intention to devote himself immediately to political activity only, he must have been preparing himself for the life of a dedicated revolutionary. The time came sooner than he anticipated. In a private note on the voyage home he wrote, "For the rest I am carrying the freshness of outlook and mean to live up to my convictions. I can gauge the degeneration of 'progressive' life which the petit bourgeoisie leads in India and I will struggle hard to avoid being conquered by petty ambitions of secure living and a bright 'career'". He was one of those who brought criticism of middle-class ideals and a new perspective of class struggle and internationalism into the Indian liberation movement. The subject of this paper has been chosen to commemorate that aspect of his convictions.

In the year of the Red Friday prelude to the General Strike and near the very day fell the centenary of the repeal of the Combinations Laws that cleared the way for stable trade union organization. Writing under the impact of that earlier victory, William Manning, a London workingman with no pretensions to be even a risen-from-the-ranks intellectual, regretted that it had come too late to halt the long-entrenched system designed to cheapen labour and defeat the repeated effort

[2] *Interview with K. M. Ashraf*, p. 412 of this volume.

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to unite in self-defense that is inherent in the labour situation. Large accumulations of capital, he points out, now made possible more complex means of monopoly economics and taxation to force men to "over-labour", treating the artisan "as a machine to be used for anything they like"[3]. Many of Manning's ideas will be found more knowledgeably argued by better known contemporaries like Hodgskin or William Thompson, but they differ in an important respect. Starting from "the history of all this struggle for existence" and the history of English legislation directed to curb the rights of labour, and showing as best he can the interdependence of all parts of the economic and political system, he works round from the industrial dispute to the key question of political power[4]. In other words he is one of the older generation who were preparing the ground for that merging of industrial and civil rights, the two-sided organization of labour, characteristic of the immediate forerunners and founders of Chartism. Workers may appear to strike as a last resort against "grinding exaction" but in reality every strike is directed against the whole system created by the "combination" of exploiters and rulers; herein lies "the future dissolution of the nations through the opposite interests which they [‘democratic wealth' and 'privilege'] create". National unity and national interest are a fraud[5]. The description of the growth of capitalism includes the colonies. "The slavery of Europeans and Africans therefore proceeds alike from the same source and the object in view . . . is to obtain possession of the property and to command the services of the industrious classes of society."[6]

This context of revolutionary implications argued from class struggle, leaves no doubt that when the writer couples together "the wretched existence of the population of Hindustan and the labouring classes of England"[7] this is not an empty phrase, and that when he appeals to "Men of Industry . . . who form the great whole of every nation" he included India.

[3] W. Manning; "The Wrongs of Man Exemplified, or an Enquiry into the origin, the cause and the effect of Superstition, Conquest and Exaction separate and united and the injustice they have operated on the condition of Man in a state of society, containing also a vindication of the original and equal right of the independent, industrious and labouring classes to the freedom of suffrage or national free-will in the choice of representatives, as the means of maintaining the true balance in society and of rendering it permanent: with an appendix in which the false doctrine attempted to be established by Malthus in his 'Essay on Population', is refuted and an attempt to prove what ought to constitute the leading principles of political economy." London, 1838, p. 207; p. 119 passim. The only edition was published posthumously; as the preface shows the writing was completed in old age and this must have been between 1824 and 1830. Otherwise the author would have mentioned the Reform Act which fully justified his warning that partial reform would merely extend the power of the immediate exploiters.

[4] Op. cit., p. 258.

[5] Op. cit., pp. 281–282.

[6] Op. cit., pp. 210, 212.

[7] Op. cit., p. 187.

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Similar references to the fate of India may be found in many contemporary publications at various levels of radicalism. *The Trades' Newspaper*, the organ of the committee of trades set up to secure repeal of the Combination Acts, will serve as evidence that a reading public existed among skilled journeymen – a clearly demarcated section of the industrial proletariat whereas the class composition of more widely-based political bodies is not always so distinct – for whom such remarks about India required no special explanation. The paper inherited a trend to the old general union, appealed to unskilled and factory labour to support the campaign, and devoted space to colonial news. Slave revolts, the resistance of American tribes to land expropriation, and the "stout resistance of the Burmese" are applauded. "The Indians will in time improve their discipline and expel the British."[8] Similarly "this worse than Indian slavery" is the way in which James Morrison described workers' conditions in the eighteen-twenties.

In all these cases the class basis of international sympathy and equality is seen in close association with the primary concerns of working class organization. The campaign for legalising the unions was given high moral sanction not only on behalf of all workers but of all "freedom". The trade union movement, even at its narrowest, has always been obliged to claim that it ultimately exists for the common benefit even of the unorganized. No matter what particular spokesmen put this into words, the concept helped to ensure the long continuity and repeated resurgence of primary organization even when far more disputes were lost than won; and whenever there has been any great upsurge of militancy on the industrial field the brotherhood of trade has flowed over into affirmation of international solidarity.

It is well established that with the emergence of a more conscious phase of class war by the end of the second decade of the XIX century and particularly in the Metropolitan Trades Union (1830) the brotherhood of man ideas popularized in the last revolutionary decade of the XVIII century are given a new, concrete meaning. The general declarations of aims and the international solidarity addresses and resolutions of the National Union of the Working Classes, the London Working Mens' Association and the Fraternal Democrats, with increasing contact with foreign workers and organizations from the late forties, were studied by a number of older writers like Schlüter, Beer, Rothstein etc. who were mainly thinking about the background of the First International and did not mention the colonial question. Most of these documents were addressed to the workers of various European countries (with the exception of Canada) and the general ones, like the first declaration of principles of the Fraternal Democrats, although professedly universal in intention, are formulated in terms that apply more appropriately to Europe. Quotations from these materials sometimes used to show "the anti-imperialist tradition of the Labour movement"[9] are not in themselves con-

[8] *The Trades' Newspaper and Mechanics' Weekly Journal*, London, July 24., 1825.
[9] v. R. P. Dutt, *Großbritanniens Empirekrise*, Berlin, 1951, p. 190; cf. ibid., *India To-Day*, London, 1940.

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vincing. Other evidence is required if we want to define the attitude to the colonies in this period. The neglect of colonial relations still persists in labour history. The most recent comprehensive history[10] published in England has no entry for India or colonies in its index. N. A. Yerofeev a few years ago published a short survey of views on colonial questions in Chartist newspapers of the thirties and forties, pointing out that they were in the main limited to the expression of general sympathy for the sufferings of oppressed peoples and showed no signs of any concrete demands for action[11].

The relation of the labour movement to India involves the following questions:

a) Did the ideal of universal equality and liberty apply outside Europe?

b) Was the common cause of the oppressed understood as a real class issue or only seen as an analogy? Was a distinction made between sympathy with the workers of these countries and support of liberation movements of a non-working class character?

c) Was there a distinct colonial policy in early movements?

As the industrial proletariat formed and its typical organizations and literature began to express its independent standpoint, it was brought face to face with the colonial problem at a number of points. Among these the following were particularly important:

1. Ireland.
2. West Indian Slave Emancipation – exploited for political ends by rival capitalist groupings and radicals.
3. The East India Company. Indian trade being a major issue in the politics of the rising industrial middle-class, the Company was the prime example of the evils of monopoly for radicals generally. Parliamentary Reform propaganda typical up to 1832 connected corruption in Parliament with fortunes derived from colonial monopolies and even popularized reforms renouncing gain from foreign possessions.
4. The Agrarian-Levelling theory of land property or the theory of the natural right of all to the products of nature.

It is of course first of all necessary to examine what kind of data were available to the people on which they could form any opinion at all, and in what connection their attention was drawn to India. It would not be possible in the scope of an article to go into the detail of how all the above-listed problems of the day contributed to the formation of an ideology, but as the majority of the theoreticians of the early movements and of Chartism fell back on natural law[12] (O'Brien for example in his last period returned completely to this position) a few words must be said about the land theory. Private property is first questioned in relation to land as the primary source of subsistence and it followed that all those who subscribed in

[10] E. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London, 1963.

[11] N. A. Yerofeev, *Chartizm i kolonial'naya politika Anglii, Novaya i noveyshaya Istoriya*, Moscow, 1957, No. 1, p. 88 passim.

[12] On the prominence of the law of nature in Chartist thought see: M. Beer, *A History of British Socialism*, London, 1953, p. 289.

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one form or another to the theory of original common ownership, saw private land property as the source of social classes and inequality, hence, generally, as the basis of state power. As the monopolizing of land and dispossession of the people is equivalent to territorial conquest and *vice versa*, this theory was one of the basic arguments against colonial possessions. This argument was not of course at any time acceptable to moderate reformers, nor did the majority of Chartists believe in abolishing private property, but when the land itself ceased to be the most important question, something of the agrarian doctrine lingered in relation to land as distinct from other property. Strengthened by the continued circulation of the works of Godwin, and even to some extent thanks to Paine, the agrarian theory often influenced new ideas about the ownership of capital and capital goods. Anti-colonial views based on this doctrine are well represented in *The Poor Man's Guardian* for instance.

One must therefore beware of reducing the origins of working class internationalism to the rights of nations earlier expounded by middle-class democrats, which certainly influenced popular ideas in the XIX century, particularly through the works of Paine and the efforts of the Utilitarians.

Any theory of the state that starts from regarding property as the source of power, would regard that power as 'usurped' from the people, whether arising from within or without. The well-known example of the Norman Conquest, invoked by older constitutional reformers for their own reasons, was taken over as an illustration, though not, I think, ever as the basis of the agrarian thesis based on natural right, for instance by the Spenceans[13]. The following extracts show how doctrines of this type were applied in the case of India:

"Alas, it is not however to the worship of this absurd idol ['Juggernaut'] that these miseries ['famine', 'fatigue', 'disease' in India] are confined! When we reflect but hastily on the wars, artificial scarcities, and destroying pestilences which are sometimes occasioned and on the ignorance, dependence, vices, extensive poverty, crimes, political oppression and miserable selfishness at all times, occasioned by the gross injustice of landed monopoly, we cannot fail to regard it as the main source of moral and political evil – the Juggernaut of civilised society . . ."[14].

A still more interesting example comes from Charles Hall, who while deriving the power of the rich in the same way from private landlordism, is more concerned with the mechanism of the industrial and commercial system which has arisen

[13] cf. C. Hill: *Puritanism and Revolution*, London, 1962. In the chapter on „The Norman Yoke" Hill identifies all references to liberties lost by earlier conquest as a backward-looking Utopian theory; see his concluding remarks on p. 122. For the Spenceans for instance it would have made no difference to their basic theories if there had never been a conquest of England. It is only possible to regard the reference to early history as a continuously transmitted legend-survival of medieval village nostalgia if its versions are collected without reference to changing content and interpretation.

[14] *Address of the Society of Spencean Philanthropists to all Mankind on the Means of providing Liberty and Happiness*, London, [1816], p. 4 f. n.

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from it and continually increases the power of wealth. "Hall's position" says Beer' "is an intermediary one between natural law or ethical socialism and the proletarian or revolutionary socialism."[15] Hall's only known book appeared in two issues in 1805/6, and although not among the best known of early socialist writings, it seems to have circulated among working-class radicals and Owenites, and was reprinted in 1850 by the co-operative socialist, John Minter Morgan, so that it became more widely known in Chartist and co-operative circles. According to Hall, once the land has been taken over by conquest in India, the capitalist system begins to operate not simply by making a profit by import and export trade but by using trade and inflated profit by extortion to acquire power over all labour and all production.

"If there were no manufactures in India, it would be impossible for the European nations to injure the natives to any great degree. They would only take from them a few of their natural productions such as cinnamon, pepper, tea etc. But by means of the manufactures they can take from them in large quantities, the necessaries of life, which the labour that produces these manufactures would raise. The natives of India have been deprived of millions and thousands of millions of bushels of rice and the necessaries of life, none of which the Europeans have received. Europeans have been deprived of millions and thousands of millions of bushels of wheat and other necessaries of life, of which the Indians have not received one grain. What the Europeans have had from them, or rather what some few of the inhabitants of Europe have had from India, is some fine muslin, silks, shawls, Chinaware, some pearls, some diamonds. What the Indians or some few of them have received from Europe has been some silver, jewellery, clockwork, gilt, carriages etc. The bulk of the people on both sides have been most miserably despoiled by this system of trade, the most pernicious and destructive to the human race that ever was invented."[16] Here too is to be found the motive of wars to extend territory and power over more and more human labour. For Hall it all amounts to an increasing and increasingly drastic slavery of the producer.

This is not the place to discuss the economic theories of these writers, which has been done often enough. For our purpose we have to note what they may have contributed to popular understanding of India or to the growth of the ideas of internationalism. Hall has in fact foreshadowed the growth of the world market based on the extension of manufacture. Once the process has started the future will be the same for all. It results in enormously increasing the power (wealth) of the capitalist to exploit the labour of the dispossessed. The exploited masses in both countries are not merely in a similar position but actually a part of the same system, of the same machine operated by the same masters. This does not produce any separate policy for India but it might suggest that if there is a solution or a way of getting free of the exploiter, it should be common to both peoples. This is already an approach to the sense of common interests on a class basis.

[15] M. Beer, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 127.
[16] C. Hall, *Effects of Civilization*, London, 1850, pp. 71, 72.

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If the above examples are compared with the contemporary views of Bentham as the classic exponent of the middle-class radical anti-colonial phase, a main line of cleavage appears between the definition of freedom as political democracy and the demand for social justice in which the notion of class conflict is inherent. This more or less corresponds to the approach to the colonial question, on the one hand among the radical supporters and hangers-on of the industrial capitalists, including those "Indophils" who became the advocates of administrative reform in India in the XIX century, and, on the other, of the radical reformers who were beginning to recognize their main enemy in the bourgeoisie by the end of the twenties, and were able to stimulate a more class-conscious struggle in wider masses of labour after 1832. Bentham's famous treatise *Emancipate your Colonies* (1793)[17] can in essence be summed up by reference to the cynical proposal to 'emancipate' the white planters and leave them a free hand to cultivate sugar in the West Indies according to their own ideas, and incidentally relieve the more sentimental sugar consumers in England of any uncomfortable responsibility for slavery. While India should be treated as an exception to the rule; the Company, being preferable to the despotism of Indian rulers, should be left in control with as little interference as possible. In 1829 Bentham changed his mind. He now felt himself to be the citizen of a great *de facto* empire likely in the near future to incorporate a few more million population in the adjoining countries and perhaps China, which would offer "a vast field for experiments in philanthropy and reforms."[18]

Meanwhile the connection between property and colonial rights is carried into the NUWC. Hetherington's *Penny Paper* (later *The Poor Man's Guardian*) prints an interesting leading article in 1831 beginning with a statement about property rights which "not only cause all the misery, all the slavery which the great majority of mankind endure – but they are the sole cause of all that is held and denounced as crime, injustice and cruelty, even by those whose property rights are the strongest and by whom they are the most respected and the most devotedly maintained." ... "Our *'brave troops'* who are endeavouring to suppress the 'insurrection' of the NATIVES who have presumed to disturb us in the possession of our 'PROPERTY' in New Holland – their country, which *we* have taken from them!"[19] On the disturbances in Jamaica the same paper writes: "Our brothers of Jamaica have revolted and take into their own hands the abolition of that slavery which a *Christian* people has imposed and a Christian government of *Whig* Liberals has countenanced while they pretended to remedy it. May fortune prosper their emancipation ... Jamaica lost to them? What right had they ever to call it theirs? It was at most 'stolen property' ... It was *lost* to those who are now regaining it and we trust that they may prove themselves more worthy of its possession than their tyrants have been".[20]

[17] J. Bentham, *Emancipate your Colonies*, 2nd edition, London, 1830.
[18] cf. J. Bowring, *Life*, note for June, 1829.
[19] *Penny Paper*, June 4th, 1831.
[20] *Poor Man's Guardian*, Feb. 25th, 1832.

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If this was the attitude towards peoples who had been kept at the most degraded level by slavery, it is certain that for those who took this line of argument there could be no question about the rights of Indians to their own country. What is noteworthy in all such cases is, that it is also assumed that the peoples who attain freedom by revolt must take their own decisions and will manage their affairs in future in their own way. For good or bad this is their natural right which does not preclude friendly co-operation – as the desire to fraternize with neighbouring peoples in Europe shows – but does preclude any tutelage however benevolent. Most of the early democrats and socialists assumed that democracy and freedom were a kind of instinct in all natural human beings.

While the survival of the Agrarian theory was no doubt important, it was not the only approach. William Thompson, who was interested less in the origins than in the results and mechanism of capitalism, also takes the East India Company to illustrate the effects of a monopoly enjoying unrestricted political and military power to plunder at will, oppress labour and speculate by creating artificial famines. The Company in India has almost limitless resources from which to extort all it needs to balance losses due to wasteful speculation. It has, in fact, special facilities for keeping up the interest on capital. The commercial side of the undertaking begins to destroy itself and becomes the less profitable part of business. The consequences are then described and Thompson here turns from the economic to the moral and political results.

"To the sordid interest of these agents [Portuguese, Dutch, English] destined to bring in succession the spoils of Asia to Europe – spoils exacted either by open plunder or by a grinding taxation – is the right to security, equality and political liberty of nearly 100 million of rational creatures deliberately sacrificed; because they were, perhaps, almost as wretched before we visited them! And when these men so enriched by foreign plunder come home their wealth, effeminacy, and oriental habits of oppression and contempt for the rights and feelings of their fellow creatures make them admirable tools in diffusing servility and corruption at home, as if to revenge on British freedom and happiness the untold miseries and depradations of the East. Yes, this indeed is a moral retribution, not the sporting of imaginery beings with the destiny of human creatures, but the unerring operation of the laws of our physical and mental organization, necessitating a course of vicious action to those whose habits have been formed by the practice of corruption, cruelty and oppression."[21]

Thus in addition to orthodox historians and political writers, the writings of those who directly contributed to the pre-Marxian socialist and democratic theory necessary for the first working class political movements, also took note of Indian affairs and provided an independent interpretation of them.

Anti-company polemics in the agitation of the middle-class for constitutional reform and free trade occupied several decades and provided abundant exposure

[21] W. Thompson, *An Enquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth most conducive to Human Happiness*, (2nd edition) London, 1850, p. 107.

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matter about British India. Many stock arguments and incidents come from this source. The working class press and platform used this material to expose not a particular ministry or interest, but a class or a system. Among the books particularly popular among lower-class readers may be mentioned Howitt's *Christianity and Colonization* which was partly appreciated for its anti-clericalism, and partly because William und Mary Howitt were generally speaking regarded as sincere friends who had contact with the working class movement and were honest radicals. *The Chartist Circular* carried an informative 3-column article on India based on materials from a book by Howitt, and a number of other exposure articles in 1840/41[22].

A great deal of information about India was spread by Whig and radical campaigners just prior to the Reform Act. "The East India Company had attracted wide attention among Radicals in the 1832 elections" and candidates were asked to take pledges to repeal the Company's Charter[23]. A Benthamite pledge required the candidate to declare: "All profit by *conquest* in every shape, I acknowledge to be no other than robbery; robbery having murder for its instrument . . . robbery committed by the ruling few in the conquering nation on the subject many in both nations . . ."[24].

The tone of such declarations was not unnaturally turned later against the middle class who inherited the privileges of colonial profits and patronage, including the "new colonial school" of Utilitarians in the reformed Parliament, making it possible for a modern historian to say: "Through Durham the views of the radical theorists prevailed over those of the colonial office and saved the Empire."[25] It is only necessary to refer to the LWMA's address to the Canadians to see how major colonial policy issues added evidence of what was popularly called the middle-class betrayal of their deluded working class allies of 1832. The detailed criticism of Whig colonial and foreign policy was the repeated subject of Chartist and pre-Chartist articles and speeches from the early thirties to the end of the fifties. The repudiation of this policy on the grounds of class interest or of democratic and humane principle represented the opposition colonial policy of the advanced working class.

Another point at which conditions in India directly touched an important section of British workers who contributed a large part of the Chartist supporters, were the reports and official documents dealing with the cotton trade. The Report of the Select Committee on Handloom Weavers (1834/5), for example, contains data about the Indian cotton trade and labour, and was widely quoted. There could well be fellow-feeling for "two million handloom weavers of Hindustan

[22] W. Howitt, *Christianity and Colonization*, London, 1838; cf. *infra* note 52; *Chartist Circular*, Glasgow, May 2nd, 1840, p. 206.

[23] S. Maccoby, *English Radicalism*, 1786–1832, London, 1955, p. 89.

[24] Quoted from R. Heward, *Proposed Declaration of Principles or say, a test proposed for Parliamentary Candidates*, London, 1831.

[25] C. R. Fay in *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, London, 1940, p. 366.

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driven from labour by machinery here and many perishing in famine."[26] The question is part of a wide discussion of the problem of machinery, which among thinking workers called forth, from about 1830 onwards, demands not for mere restriction but for social control, even for "a republican principle" of "a management chosen by the operatives from among themselves"[27]; accompanied by many theoretical statements about the monopoly of machinery resulting in capital accumulation, analogies with land monopoly and even statements that in the 'philosophical' sense machinery is equivalent to the elements of nature. Peter McDouall saw the end of labour's independence when "labour was a second time deprived by the robbers of its machines"[28]. The two successive "robberies" are the subject of his epic poem *The March of Serfdom*, and it is not an accident that it is in India that this same history – the successive rise of feudalism and capitalism – is traced by Ernest Jones in his epic[29]. It was a living problem which did much to make workers conscious of a world-scale class struggle.

Hence in the early thirties when the other essential international aim of trade union alliances appears, this was probably not the first attempt. Trade club connections with Ireland go back a very long way for a number of trades, and in the second decade of the XIX century regular alliances of textile workers linked industrial centres in the three kingdoms. In 1833 it is reported that "coalitions of the workmen of England, France and Germany" are in regular correspondence and exchange delegates[30]. There is a general spirit of expansion; the Operative Builders declare that this is "the commencement of a new era in the condition of the working class in the world"[31].

[26] P. Gaskell, *Artizans and Machinery*, London, 1836; v. *Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Handloom Weavers*, 1834–35. Indian labour conditions were also known from the evidence of English craftsmen in the report on the affairs of the Company in 1813 which was given a popular circulation, cf. *Interesting Extracts from the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee of the whole House . . . into the Affairs of the East India Company in the session 1813 (1814)*; *Illustrative of the Improvements in the Manufacture of Iron, Steel, Brass, Tin, Copper, Hemp, Cordage etc. by the Natives of India*, London, 1814.

[27] *Voice of the Country and General Provincial Politician*, Liverpool, No. 1. July, 1832; p. 40. Compare similar statements in *Magazine of Useful knowledge and co-operative Miscellany*, Oct. 1830, p. 29, p. 38. 'Artizan': *Machinery, its tendency, viewed particularly in reference to the working classes*, 1843; *English Chartist Circular*, No. 133, 1843, pp. 324–330 und No. 19, 1841, p. 75; *The Man*, Aug. 25th. 1833; cf. the debate on the Rights of Man reported in *Penny Paper*, May 27th, 1831.

[28] P. McDouall in *English Chartist Circular*, No. 47, 1841. For the *March of Serfdom* see *McDouall's Chartist and Republican Journal*, Manchester, 1841 (all issues).

[29] E. Jones, *The Revolt of Hindostan*, London, 1857, l. 755 *passim*.

[30] v. *Pioneer*, Nov. 13, 1833, No. 13; *Destructive* No. 42, Nov. 1833. *The Man*, Nov. 24, 1833, p. 158

[31] v. *The Man*, Dec. 8th, 1833, p. 172.

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An important trend towards internationalism in the trade union movement is seen in Thompson's *Labour Rewarded* which specially called attention to vast reserves of potential cheap labour in India and China. Competition in the rapidly developing world market, he explains, is a ceaseless search for cheap labour power, breeding competition also among workers and necessitating efforts to keep out not only foreign labour, but cheap manufactures from abroad. The capitalist will, if necessary, destroy productive forces in the interest of higher profit. The workers will attempt to establish ever wider trade union organization internationally, but in Thompson's gloomy view all their efforts will meet with too many difficulties to prove more than a palliative[32]. In spite of this pessimism – Thompson regarded the trade unionists as an aristocracy of labour with the vices of all other aristocracies – the analysis, which is evidently based upon observations of actual trends and ideas among workers at that time, was a very useful one, particularly as it is not stated as a recommendation so much as a prediction of what must happen and eventually embrace the millions of Asia as well.

It is clear from countless statements in the working class press by rank and file workers as well as leaders, that wars to gain or to retain colonial territory were regarded as unjust wars.

The note of a working class way of thinking on the question of unjust war comes through clearly in the resolutions passed by the NUWC protesting against troops being sent to prevent disturbances in the course of the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies. In commenting on the resolution, a contributor to their paper remarks that if compensation is to be paid to anybody it should be to the Negroes who only stand to gain a reduction of three hours off the working day[33]. "We class our late wars in China and Afghanistan with the war you are now waging in Algeria as *unjust wars*", wrote Lovett in an *Address* to the workers of France in 1844[34]. O'Brien, to a direct question whether he would fight to defend India from a Russian invasion, replied in two ways. First, by making a distinction between just and unjust wars – his opponent, he says, talks of war "as if it were a mere pastime or a mere paltry commercial question of pounds, shillings and pence", making no distinction between fighting against Canada and fighting France or Russia. (That is, between a nation struggling for freedom and a capitalist state.) Secondly, he adopts the usual line of the popular speaker – "Let those who profit by 'our Indian *possessions*' be off to India and let them fight a thousand battles for them if they like. Let the proprietors of East India Stock, let the owners of East India merchantmen, let the English and Irish merchants and brokers and writers and underwriters and governors and judges and naval and military officers and liver-coloured nabobs and all such aristocrats and commercial speculators as have either wrung or are now wringing fortunes out of Hindu

[32] W. Thompson, *Labour Rewarded*, London, 1827, pp. 75–83.

[33] *Poor Man's Guardian*, June 15th, 1833, No. 106; cf. *Poor Man's Guardian*, No. 21, Aug. 21st, 1832, pp. 163–164.

[34] W. Lovett, *Life and Struggles of William Lovett*, London, 1876, p. 103.

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sweat and misery – let all such persons go and fight for 'our Indian *possessions*', but let them not mock our degradation by asking us, working people, to fight along with them, having been robbed of everything we ever earned by the upper and middle-classes . . . We the working people of Great Britain and Ireland have no interest whatever in defending those 'possessions', nor any description of possessions belonging to men who have robbed us of our political rights and franchises. On the contrary we have an interest in the prospective loss or ruin of all such 'possessions', seeing they are but instruments of power in the hands of our domestic oppressors . . .". He added that there was indeed one barbarous power against which he would welcome a war – "the English ruling class"[35].

Possibly directly inspired by this debate, in order to counteract its effect, the organ of the 'moral force' London Chartist Association, the editorial of which was at that time influenced by Francis Place (who as will be remembered, in his latter years enjoyed, through his friendship with Mill, the patronage of the Court of Directors) came out with a long article explaining the benefits of colonial trade, the Russian menace to India and the need for "a vast" increase in armaments.

One of the first meetings of the Fraternal Democrats in 1837 was to have been devoted to India but had to be postponed due to the Polish crisis, and it is not known to me at the moment whether it ever took place or not. The probable trend of any such discussion may be gathered from an article by Harney in his own paper published at the time and quoted below. At the beginning of 1838 *The Northern Star* had a leader on Canada and followed through the year with news in full support of the rebels as "revolutionary". Anyone volunteering to fight in Canada was to be regarded as a traitor. The hand of O'Brien, who was now on the staff of *The Northern Star*, is visible in a fresh attack on colonies in general, with Canada as the immediate object lesson.

"This faction talks of *our* colonies: they lie, the vagabonds. We have no colonies; our aristocracy and merchants possess colonies all over the world, but the people of England – the real veritable people of England do not possess a sod in their own country – much less colonies in any other . . . What has the British artizan to do with Canada or Canada with them? Nothing, gentlemen, absolutely nothing, except to pay (out of their miserable wages) for the support of 4,000 troops there . . . and for a legion of civil and military placemen who annually consume more of our substance than could support half the poor of England on the new dietary system." Further he says that if English workers protest or rebel against these injustices they will be treated just like Canadian rebels. An Englishman who fights in Canada "is worse than a murderer"[36].

Another article connects the interests of the English and the Irish with the Canadian struggle. It is not just a dispute over the control of revenue; what the Canadians want is a "radical revolution", national independence and self-govern-

[35] *McDouall's Chartist and Republican Journal*, No. 21, No. 23, Manchester, 1841. Cf. *Poor Man's Guardian*, No. 21, Aug 21st, 1832, pp. 163, 164.

[36] *Northern Star*, Jan. 1838, p. 4.

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ment by the people. Parliament therefore treated them exactly as the Parliament of Charles I's days had dealt with feudalism, that is by cutting off supplies. It was a middle-class Parliament and therefore had the supplies in its hands. So far the only successful revolutions have been made by the middle-class because they control the material resources[37].

Perhaps this is the nearest approach in this period to a direct statement associating democratic revolution with the struggle for national independence. Furthermore, it really states that the bourgeoisie *must* deal with the colonies in the way they do.

In 1839 Harney begins his *London Democrat* with copious news of European movements and the promise of attention to the colonies.

It was perhaps not without significance that in her account of England and the Chartist movement, Flora Tristan, who made several visits to England in the thirties and attended the Chartist Convention in 1839, devoted a good many pages to India. She stressed the connection between the colonial system and the poverty of English workers whose wages were kept down by the competitive race for export profits. The Union Ouvrière, which was to provide the proletariat with an international force, is generally thought to have been influenced by Chartism as well as by Owenism[38]. "The great organic change which we now seek and in which we recognize the spirit of real union not only of trades but of working men", as an English worker expressed it, was perhaps the prevalent hope of those years[39].

It is important to note that O'Connor, the major acknowledged mass leader, although explicitly rejecting socialism and communism and less clear on the matter of class struggle, not only stood for self-determination but regarded this as essential to democracy; and democracy, he said, applied to "the whole human race, irrespective of their country, breed or colour." There is never any doubt as to what O'Connor intends to convey, even when his ideas themselves are muddle-headed, and this short statement leaves no room for ambiguity. It occurred in a speech made to the Chartist National Association in 1845 and it may be that the specific mention of non-Europeans was felt necessary to clarify the old formula because of the wars in India, which were on a much bigger scale and a more serious threat to British power than any colonial wars hitherto. O'Connor's paper had taken a pro-Indian stand.

After reading numbers of statements of the type above quoted in various kinds of working class literature in the first half of the XIX century and considering them in context, it is hardly possible to avoid the impression that the acknowledgement of the right of self-determination for India and other dependencies – the core of the primitive working class colonial policy as it were – had more to do with

[37] *Northern Star*, Febr. 3rd, 1835.

[38] F. Tristan, *Promenades dans Londres*, Paris, 1840; J. L. Puech, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre de Flora Tristan*, Paris, 1925, pp. 302–306.

[39] *English Chartist Circular*, May 23rd, 1941.

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notions of social justice than nationalism. This, together with the condemnation of unjust wars of conquest and vague notions of international working class unity and co-operation, seems to be what at least some sections of workers had gained with the realization of the central struggle between labour and capital. In association with the demand for political power (the suffrage) in order to control accumulation and the abuse of machinery for profit, the colonies are seen as another source of capitalist wealth and the colonial peoples as another source of exploited labour, the producers of wealth, or, as one writer calls them, the 'real capital'. Since the majority of workers lived near or below the poverty line, and the best-off very far below the standard of the middle-class, there was no question of their sharing in the spoil. How widely any of this was consciously perceived it is difficult indeed to guess. Probably the commonest attitude of the workingman was simple rejection of the colonies as no concern of his. The Chartists and their forerunners kept up a vigorous exposure of colonial wrongs, no doubt as additional ammunition against the ruling class and the government, passed resolutions of protest, urged workers to hold aloof from unjust wars. It was largely a policy of negation. They based their broad campaigns on the tactic of sticking to one demand, the Charter, in the belief that this would secure majority support and that once in Parliament the true leaders elected by the people would deal with all the other questions. Everything depended on winning these democratic rights, and they liked to think that their fight for the Charter was at the same time a fight on behalf of humanity.

The petitions to Parliament did not make direct demands for the many reforms that they anticipated as a result of the franchise. The briefly worded inclusion of Irish Repeal in the 1842 Petition aroused considerable protest from some localities, not because they disapproved of repeal but because the petition was not the place for it.

On the whole it has to be admitted that considering the space available, the educational level of its readers and the very many issues to discuss in this extremely agitated period, the amount of reference to colonial affairs in the working class press is if anything more than might have been expected. The evidence is incomplete and always will be, because the Chartists diffused their aims by means of the spoken more than the written word.

The working class movement had no special policy for India. The statements given above sufficiently prove that India was assumed to be covered by general principles that were accepted. The trouble in understanding what was intended on many other matters too, is that very often we can only find some general formulation, often very briefly phrased, the full content of which must be decided from other data. In the phase when basic ideas that were incorporated later in Chartism were in process of formation, one of the first formulations of an all-in colonial policy was given as a clause in a draft programme, still presented in the old style of a "constitution" to be adopted by the National Convention then contemplated. It is nothing if not brief. "That Ireland shall constitute and legislate for herself, also all the colonies." This was endorsed by the NUWC and followed soon

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after by a resolution on Ireland[40]. The draft had been printed by R. E. Lee, a friend of Harney, whose journal at this time repeatedly attacked the tyranny of the West Indians. There is another contribution by the author of this draft proposal in the same paper in which the following passage occurs: ". . . Whenever England weighs upon me as one monstrous mass of cant and quackery, I bathe myself in the gleam and gorgeousness of that glorious land, India, with its prodigal fruitfulness and its rich phantasies will ever keep the Heart of the World, the Mind of Europe, young."[41]

It would be somewhat surprising if the writer of these words did not intend India to be included in "also all the colonies".

This clause is in fact the sense of the original colonial clause of the Chartists' programme. The Chartists' model for dealing with colonial questions was Ireland, and their conclusions were arrived at in negociations with Irish revolutionaries. In the main it was the Irish who decided, for the Chartists, like all old democrats, were apt to assume that they should not interfere too much in the domestic affairs of other peoples, and that therefore the Irish ought to know what was best for Ireland. Ireland is the concrete case of recognizing mutuality of interest between the proletariat and a colonial freedom movement and the model for other cases wherever they might appear. In the same way when Marx later treats of the attitude to be taken to the question, he deals at large with the case of Ireland, where the issue was quite plain.

When the colonial clause came up for discussion in 1851 at the Chartist convention it was spoken of as a principle that had always been accepted. Section IX of the new programme then being discussed dealt with the army. Since the early thirties all programmes had contained a demand to abolish the standing army (it was included in the demands of the London Corresponding Society in the XVIII century), the constitution of a people's militia and the banning of all war unless in self-defense. This too implied no colonial garrisons and hence no unwilling colonies. It was in connection with the Army, therefore, that a modification of the old aim of immediately granting freedom and withdrawing troops from colonial territories, that is the granting of full self-determination, was now modified. Section IX then read:

"Standing armies are contrary to the principle of democracy and dangerous to the liberties of the people. At the same time the Convention acknowledges the expediency of a standing force being maintained until suitable changes in our colonies have rendered its continuance no longer requisite."

This was not passed without opposition. One can well imagine an old-timer of the O'Brien or the Hetherington school finding it difficult to swallow an expression like "our colonies". Confusing as it may seem, the clause containing the aim of abolishing all colonies and the establishment of the militia were retained.

After the Convention, Ernest Jones, who was responsible for the change, replied to criticism.

[40] *The Man*, Nov. 24th, 1833, p. 54; *Cosmopolite*, 1832, April 7th and Sept. 1832.
[41] *The Man*, 1833, p. 24.

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"It may be said why do we want armies for our colonies? We don't want to tyrannize over them – and they would be better free. Granted. But they want a standing force at the present time even supposing that we had given them equal laws . . . Russia or France, Kaffirs or Malays would deluge them with blood and sink them under slavery."[42] At the same time Jones said, in another context, that "The entire system of colonial government is an error"; and "every advantage derived from a colony would be derived from a free state"[43].

This is certainly a great change since the thirties when the *Poor Man's Guardian* had welcomed the possibility of the Jamaicans and Barbadans taking their affairs into their own hands after expelling their rulers. But there would have been nothing to prevent Jones remembering the recent example of how serious the Sikh resistance had been or the ability of the more backward Afghans to keep their independence, or even the self-evident fact that after all the greater part of the British army in India was composed of Indian soldiers. Not to mention that he himself had depicted in all seriousness the winning of independence and the founding of a modern state by India in his *Revolt of Hindostan*. The wording of this new clause is for once perfectly clear – and even clarifies for us what was intended by the old one. The only possible meaning here is that it envisages a delay in granting independence under tutelage and the imposition from above by a paternal government of democratic institutions. Perhaps one of the most disturbing aspects of this redrafting is the tone of condescension and the absence of any plan of seeking contact with possible colonial allies in the present or future phase of the struggle against the bourgeoisie. It would have seemed more reasonable if the motive had been to retain the army in order to combat the counter-revolution, as a lesson of 1848 for instance, or even if there had been a flashback to the lessons of the French Revolution to suggest that colonies could be used as a base for counter-revolution. Here perhaps there is a clue to Jones's future vacillations in spite of the undoubted advance in his political thinking in the next six years, thanks to his contact with Marx and Engels[44]. His Indian articles in 1857/8 do not always reveal a very clear grasp of the situation or of what it demanded, and in spite of all his sincerity and undoubted courage in his stand during the Indian National Rebellion, he had been associated in the fifties with the dubious Indian Reform Association, and finally did join hands with the Manchester radicals, the group that above all had strong interest in retaining India.

The often-quoted letter of Engels to Kautsky (Sept. 12th 1882) admits that it would be extremely difficult to predict what a proletarian revolution would have to do in relation to the colonies. For India he thought a revolution was probable, but what he was perfectly clear about and Jones was not, either in 1851 or later,

[42] *Notes to the People*, No. 1, May, 1851, p. 131.

[43] Loc. cit., p. 134.

[44] For contacts with Marx v. Galkin, V. V. *K. Marks i F. Engels v borbe za vozrozhdenie revolyutsionnogo Chartizma*, *Novaya i Noveyshaya Istoriya*, Moscow, 1958, No. 3.

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was that no blessings should be enforced. He does not talk of bestowing good laws on backward colonies, as Jones had done, but of leading such peoples as rapidly as possible towards independence. As far as this letter goes, Engels does not stipulate democratic institutions but merely independence. Eventually in 1857 Jones, faced with the facts of the Indian Rebellion, might be said to have adopted this standpoint in regard to India at least in so far as he supports the rebellion as a "sacred cause" of national freedom no less than Poland or Ireland etc. regardless of the character of the leaders and the presumed aim of restoring the Moghul dynasty. He certainly and rightly looked for and reported all signs of popular support among the peasantry and of popular initiative. He seems to have known little about the urban craftsmen-traders who in some centres played a considerable part, and he exaggerated no doubt the rumour that the leaders at Delhi were preparing a constitution. There was a great deal that he simply did not know about social conditions in India, but the points which he raised, because he was writing for a working class audience which he was at the same time trying to mobilize for renewed struggle in England, do suggest the logic that, as the war of independence depended on unity and on the confidence of the masses in their leaders, a successful uprising must have called forth new forces as other wars of independence had done.

This much Jones had himself perceived when he wrote his imaginery history of India, *The Revolt of Hindostan*, in 1857.

The Afghan and Punjab wars were the major events that called special attention to India in the period of intense working class struggle. The attitude to India became more defined. Although there are always some who think that the middle-class can still provide possible allies, the antagonism is on the whole much sharper after 1839/40. Events in India played their part in unmasking the democratic pretensions of public men and the claims of the Government to be enlightened. A world view of politics and a consciousness of continental struggles became more common. "Britain is so linked with the interests of all nations that the dial hand of the world's deliverance must move backwards or forwards on the event of this [the Chartist] movement."[45] However, protests against the wars in India at this time continue to be limited to repeated disgust at further revelations of ruthlessness or perfidy, merely disowning responsibility for the misdeeds of the ruling class.

Irish patriotism inspired anonymous articles in the Dublin *Citizen* which seemed both very well informed and unsparing in denunciation. Years later a very much milder version was published in book form by W. M. Torrens, M. P. On the upsurge of the Indian freedom movement this work was reprinted by an Indian editor at Allahabad after the background of the original had been forgotten[46].

The *Citizen* articles are headed *India – her own – and another's; being chapters from an unpublished book entitled 'The Spirit of Conquest'*[47]. The 1872

[45] *English Chartist Circular*, No. 6, 1841.

[46] W. M. Torrens, M. P., *Empire in Asia. How we came by it*, London, 1872. Reprinted: Allahabad, 1936.

[47] *The Citizen*, Dublin, vol. I–III, 1839–1841.

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version was toned down, as the difference in the title suggests, to the story of a sad past, but sufficiently critical and revealing to appeal to patriotic feeling in India in the nineteen-thirties at a time of so much biased and chauvinistic writing. Torrens by now had doubts whether self-government in India would "preserve peace". The crimes committed in the early days of conquest were, of course, regrettable, but Burke, Cornwallis, Bentinck, Mill, Cobden and so on had believed that there was "a debt of regeneration due to India". Comment on the Rebellion of 1857 is avoided but the Royal Proclamation of 1858 is quoted as instalment on the debt.

Yet the *Citizen* article (in 1842) *Who are the Afghans? – And why should Irishmen fight with them?* had been a forthright and vigorous vindication of independence, although emphasizing the common interest, not of classes, but of oppressed nations. The writer here accused the majority of liberal writers on India of cant, and ridiculed their inability to conceive of any kind of liberty in the absence of legal codes and a constitutional monarchy like their own. The Indian village and the Afghan village and clan system offered, in his opinion, more true liberty than did British rule; Muslim law was superior to Roman or Norman codes, and the patriarchal basis of Hindu society had its points.

Further articles on India published over a number of issues of *The English Chartist Circular*[48] gave quite a comprehensive historical survey bringing out the more favourable aspect of Indian institutions and making comparisons with European history. There is nothing original in all this, but the sources quoted are among the more reliable and many popular fallacies and misrepresentations are demolished. It is interesting that the author regards the village panchayat as "one of the systems of self-rule which the British uprooted in India." The attention given to social data as against purely political chronicling is unusual at that date.

The hardy resistance of Afghanistan inspired popular sympathy and admiration (as it did again in her stand for independence after the first world war) in wider circles than the Irish patriots alone. An anonymous poem with the same title as the article mentioned above, *Who are the Afghans?*, appeared in the respectable *Tait's Magazine* and was reprinted in Chartist and other papers. It is quite a good poem with some bite, and extends the lesson to empire in general in a more decidedly democratic manner than the *Citizen* article.

"Crush the Afghan! Why does *he* dare
To claim man's birthright and be free?

What is he the bold Moslem thief,
Rude Gheber, Buddhist, blind Hindu?
All but your orthodox belief
He dares to have? Wants freedom too!

English Chartist Circular, Nos. 96–113, 1841.

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Lifts *he* his sword 'gainst British wrong,
Plucks *he* the lion by the mane?
The rebel! Is not Britain strong?
Sweep forth his race from hill and plain!

Go crush the Afghan! Ask him why
He, dog, prefers *his* will to yours?
Full many a slave, 'neath every sky,
Your mighty Helotry endures.

Toils to fill your cheating coffers,
Your bondage feels, nor dares to sigh,
Who are the Afghans? Crush the scoffers,
They dare refuse! – Then let them die."

Strew bones to bleach, and skulls to whiten
In every gorge round Afghan's throne;
And your triumphant march to heighten,
Be careful that they're not your own."[49]

A meeting of the Leicester Complete Suffrage Association discussed the profit and loss from the colonies and a speaker protested against the suppression of free speech in India. The truth was that "if the Indians had but a few such men as Hyder Ali and Tipu Sahib we should soon be driven out from every one of our Indian possessions"[50].

T. O. Davis, the Irish revolutionary poet well-known in Chartist circles and associated with John Mitchel, introduced a romantic nationalist tone in a poem that added "brave old Dost Mohammad", "the fierce Pushtani lion, the fiery Akhbar Khan" and "gallant Abdel Kader" to the gallery of popular foreign champions of freedom, which more or less began its modern series with Toussaint L'Ouverture (acceptable to all self-respecting democrats in the XVIII century), Tipu Sultan (for the more radical minded) and, more recently, a number of leaders of oppressed minorities in Europe[51].

A long article on the war in India in *The English Chartist Circular*, a more moderate journal than *The Northern Star*, deals eloquently with the effects of conquest on the Indian people. It is based on Howitt who was well informed, and sets out to show that England was not "destined" to rule India. Although the appeal is mainly in terms of morality ("People of England, do you think that a series of atrocities such as these are likely to be blessed with permanent success?") there is something like a call to action although it is left to the readers themselves

[49] *English Chartist Circular*, vol. II, No. 80, 1841, p. 112.
[50] Ibid., June 1842, p. 147.
[51] T. O. Davis, *Poems*, London, 1846.

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to find the opportunity for public demonstration of disapproval. "Wash your hands of the guilt and show on every possible occasion that you have neither part nor lot in the matter."[52] The appeal is supported with a quotation from Milton, whose name was much more widely known and honoured among educated workers and radicals as the great poet of the Republic at that date than it is to-day.

They err who count it glorious to subdue
By Conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large Countries, and in field great Battles win,
Great Cities by assault: what did these Worthies
But rob, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable Nations, neighbouring or remote,
Made Captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their Conquerors . . .

Paradise Regained, III, 73–80

When Harney stood for Tiverton in 1847 against Palmerston he attacked his opponent's foreign policy in great detail, showing him as the ally of despotism everywhere – Poland, Portugal, Turkey, Egypt, Canada, Austria, Ireland, China ("a murderous and immoral assault for purposes of trade"), Afghanistan and India – "the mockery of calling Hindostan 'our Indian Empire' in relation to the working class of this country who had not one foot of soil they could call their own in their own native land". Palmerston was apparently shaken by this searching analysis of his record as a statesman and thought it necessary to reply, also in minute detail, in a speech lasting three hours, followed up in five columns in *The Times*[53].

In this year the new magazine founded by O'Connor and Ernest Jones, *The Labourer*, introduced a special column for colonial news. The outbreak of war in the Punjab, however, was given a longer article.

". . . The Sikhs in India have risen against us and repulsed our troops at Moultan. This has been met by a resolution on the part of the Indian government to annex the Punjab – confiscation and plunder is still the motto of the colonial office. It is hoped that the Sikhs will save General Whish and his brigands the trouble of annexation by driving them for ever out of the country. Our colonial managers have had risings and troubles in Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope, . . . The only answer as in all similar cases of colonial tyranny has been the bayonet which so far has proved successful.

"The day however is not far distant when the rule of the sword so unblushingly exercised in our colonies will fall by its own power. With the annexation of the Canadas to their republican neighbours – an event not far distant – will commence our colonial disasters, which will progress till we are ousted everywhere. Our

[52] *English Chartist Circular*, vol. II, No. 61, 1842, p. 71.
[53] *Northern Star*, May 14th, & June 19th, 1847. See also A. R. Schoyen, *The Chartist Challenge*, London, 1958, pp. 150–152.

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government will then discover when too late the mistaken policy of ruling colonies by physical force alone."[54]

This, judging by the style, was probably written by Ernest Jones, who had joined the Chartists little more than a year before and was now much involved in the work of the Fraternal Democrats and foreign political exiles. There is no condemnation here of colonialism on principle, only indignation at the methods, and even a suggestion that the colonies might be retained by benevolent rule. The point other Chartist writers had always made was that no capitalist state could be benevolent even in their own country and certainly not when they came as foreign conquerors with absolute power. We may also note here the tendency to make hasty, enthusiastic predictions as he did later in 1857, a weakness which Marx noted in saying that he was too prone to jump ahead. The prediction about Canada shows lack of understanding either of the very different situation in European settler colonies, which had certain democratic apparatus and traditions, and the position of conquered peoples in Asia and Africa, not to mention the suggestion that it was preferable to be a dependency of a republic rather than a monarchy. It is worth noting these weaknesses in order to appreciate the path of development that was to bring him to a fuller understanding of the Indian problem and of politics generally, and also to see how certain confused ideas seem to have persisted right through his career.

An article by Harney a little later on the same subject is far more forceful and retains more of the old line. Harney protests in the name of the English people against this new addition to the long chain of crimes of "'our Indian empire'" (in inverted commas after the manner of O'Brien, his old teacher), against those who "usurp possession of every colony and conquered state as they have monopolized and usurped everything valuable in this island – land, mines, fisheries and every description of property produced but not enjoyed by the wronged and cheated Proletarians."[55] The editorial promises to pay full attention to India in future issues.

O'Brien recommends the journeymen bakers to take example from the carters of Calcutta who recently held up the entire shipping on the imposition of a new tax, while the bakers, who could easily organize themselves to abolish nightwork, are passive[56].

There may also be found a number of poems by workingmen and women, not all by any means members of political organizations. It seems to me a detail worth noting, because poetry – even mediocre poetry – selects its themes from subjects that for one reason or another have particularly moved and interested the writer. If we find advanced ideas about colonial liberty in verse that is not primarily propagandist in the sense of being associated with any campaign, it argues that these ideas were not only to some extent in popular consciousness but that they

[54] *The Labourer*, vol. 4, 1847, p. 279.
[55] *Democratic Review*, vol. I, June, 1849, pp. 20–22.
[56] *Social Reformer*, Oct. 1849, p. 31.

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interested people, had some relation to their own life. In an "Ode" to Wellington (1835) by Cole, a member of a mechanics' trade union and a delegate to the National Union of the Working Classes, later a Chartist, can be seen quite unmistakably the association of colonial oppression with the class struggle. This is further accentuated when the second edition of the poem appears in a volume in which the author includes an appeal to all workers to join their appropriate trade unions. He says that the day of the independent worker and tradesman is over; now only firm unity and class solidarity can protect them against the growing power of capital. This explains why he sees Wellington as a monster and the people of India equally entitled to defend themselves; for Wellington's record in the service of despotism on the continent, in relation to Ireland, his military campaigns in the Peninsula and in India, his implacable opposition to any progressive policy in England, his offer to bring out the army to defeat the Reform Bill in 1832, and the many instances of sending troops to deal with riots and strikes, made him a symbol of everything reactionary, the embodiment of the ruling class that uses both law and violence against the common people.

"Man of Titles – won with blood –
Warrior, victor – thou hast stood
Smiling o'er the crimson flood.

Known as battle's dreadful lord,
Coldly tempered as thy sword;
Rest thee, peace hath been restored;

Rest thee, gallant war-hound, rest,
For thee a long repose were best,
Thy couch should be the Phoenix nest.

For, though battle's rage is o'er
Still thou'rt he who heretofore,
Led the fight on India's shore.

How the murdered people fell,
Hunted by the dogs of hell,
Let the stained Malpurbu tell."

"Mark – the people there were slain!
Mind – the people here remain,
Shall he whet his scyth again?

Hark! I hear it whispered 'those
Who thus have died were Britain's foes'.
Wherefore? Tell he who knows.

In Reason's glorious diadem
Truth has placed the brightest gem;
We, then, we were foes to them.

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Not alas to them alone;
Scattered round, from zone to zone,
View the wreck of Freedom's throne."

"And tell the fiend who crushed the Pole,
The Briton still has nursed his soul
Too proudly to endure control;

Will, with a power unknown to thee
Assert and keep that liberty.
Can'st meet us, Arthur, mentally?
No, thou art only havoc's lord
Thy trust is solely in thy sword."
. . . . . .
"No – and all remember well
By whose sword the people fell;
Shall he govern? Britain tell!"

Wellington and reaction are to be defeated by the power that they cannot use and do not understand, the unity and the moral-intellectual power of the working class. The final verse is a clear challenge:

"On, and our triumph is achieved
But mark! and be these words believed,
Who trusts a Foe should be deceived."[57]

Wellington continued to add to his laurels, and, in addition, mounted cannon in the streets of London to intimidate the Kennington Common demonstration in 1848. The persecution and vicious sentences of Chartists and Irish revolutionaries arrested in the following months were not forgotten.

Ernest Jones's fine poem *The Revolt of Hindostan* has not yet received the attention it deserves. It was Jones's intention that it should be taken not only as a work of imagination but as a serious statement of his ideas and it is in fact a document of a Chartist-influenced theory of society. It is a theory individual to Ernest Jones, but in fact it contains a great deal of the ideas and the subjects that contributed to Chartism, and allows us to see interesting survival-forms derived from earlier phases of the democratic movement. Although Jones developed and changed his ideas in after years he republished the poem in 1857, which argues that he did not even then consider it inconsistent with his later position.

The second reason why the poem is interesting is as a utopian socialist treatise on India. It envisages the future freedom of India and – although the basic theory was

[57] C. Cole, *Ode to His Grace the Duke of Wellington*, London, (2nd edition) 1835. He may have contributed the note from Munro's *Life and Correspondence* which appears in *Poor Man's Guardian*, May 19th, 1832, or have taken the Malpurbu incident from there.

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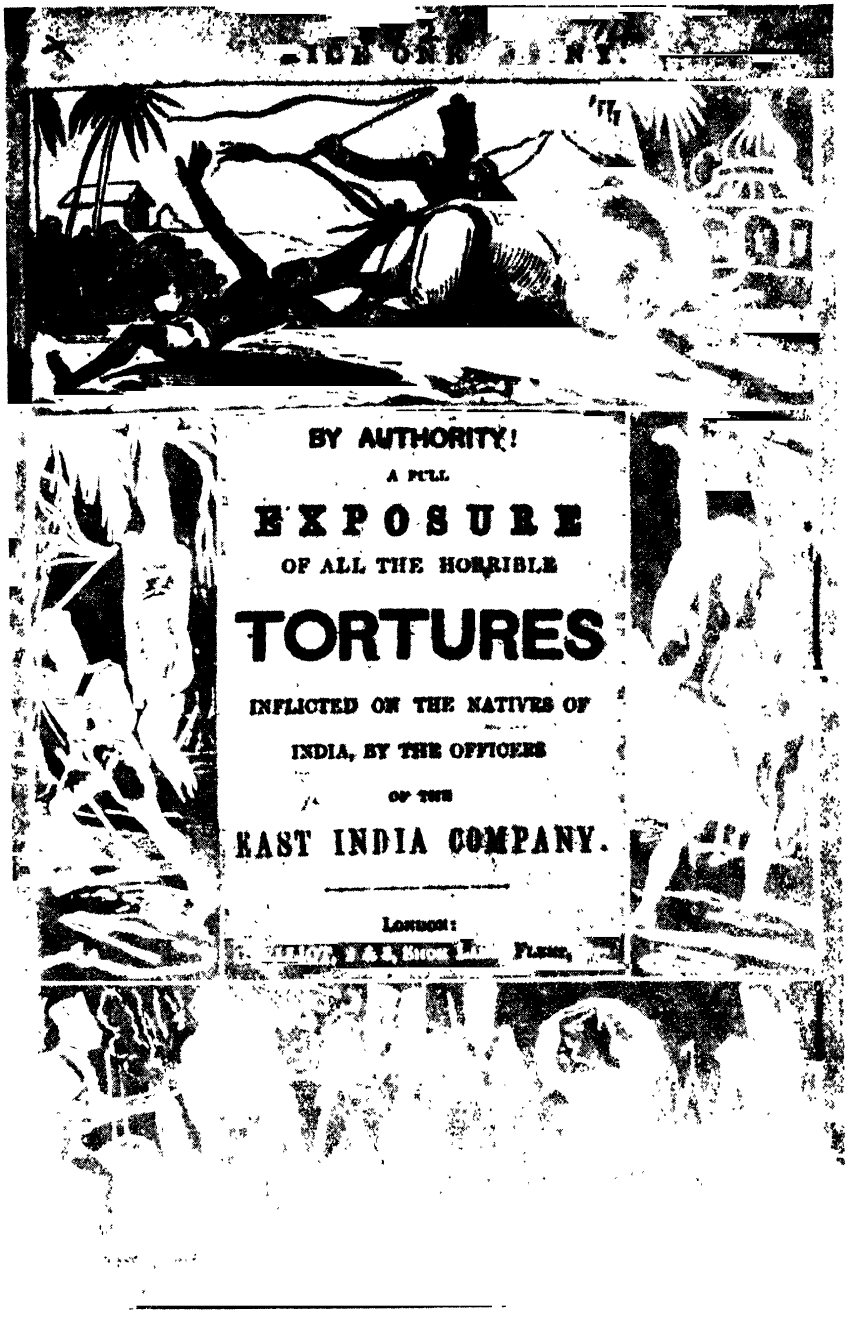

Plate 1. Title page of a pamphlet, c. 1857

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based on a false conception of the isolated development of nations – it was progressive at that time in as much as it does not depict India as static, as incapable of progress on her own account, but on the contrary, deliberately stages the first successful socialist revolution in India – the young and vigorous country that succeeds when Europe and America have become fossilized or decadent.

The whole conception of a world that will ultimately be linked together in its history reflects the growing international outlook. Jones as a matter of fact is less able than some of his contemporaries to see that nations were already objectively interdependent and still thinks in old-fashioned terms about the expansion of trade, but he is nevertheless internationalist in spirit.

Jones must have been interested in India long before he wrote the poem; for although it was written in prison without books to assist him, various details show that he was acquainted with older classics of Indian history. The Indian part describing the revolt is not the India of Jones's day, but old, 'Company India' at the end of the XVIII century. The description of the gathering revolt, the formation of alliances of local chiefs, the battle scenes, the "fated man" who arises to lead the struggle, all belong to the setting of the Maratha Confederacy; while the appeal for aid to Parliament during the Mysore war, the anxious debate in the Commons and panic in the City of London are all faithfully recorded. Tipu Sultan is in fact there in two senses – the ghostly Tipu hovering above the victorious Indian armies –

> "Then carnage closed beneath its cloudy screen:
> Oft paused the guns – but terror shrieked between!
> And grimly smiled, the sulphury curtain through,
> The gleaming form of chivalrous Tipoo,
> Plucking with airy hand the tattered rag,
> Where still his death-fight filled the British flag."[58]

– and the progressive spirit of that remarkable man who might have transformed India had he defeated the British.

There was some historical basis for the fantasy. The documents and histories published soon after the fall of Seringapatam revealed a fascinating personality. Not only did his relations with the French and the story of his interest in the new ideas of these allies associate him for English "Jacobins" with the great Revolution, but in fact his readines to make compromises to achieve a unity strong enough to defeat the British and to undertake practical modernising reforms, like the encouragement of manufacture and the foundation of a state bank with a scheme for credit to encourage production, appeared progressive. Far from being, as his enemies liked to depict him, a monster of barbarity, an oriental Napoleon, or something like his famous tiger that for more than a century-and-a-half has been

[58] E. Jones, *The Revolt of Hindostan*, London, 1857. The original edition was entitled *The New World; a democratic Poem dedicated to the people of the United Queendom and of the United States of America*, London, 1850. The only modern reprint is Calcutta, 1957.

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mauling the Company soldier in the India Museum, he was thought to have been more like an Indian Peter the Great. His maligned personality was vindicated by no less respectable a person than Mrs. Barbauld, and Spence reprinted the essay with approval in his journal[59].

The state that emerges after the victory is neither feudal nor yet capitalist but a mid-way form of a centralized, still semi-feudal state with echoes of Tod's picture of Rajput chivalry, and a reformed religion – possibly some memory in Jones's mind of Brahmo Samaj.

"Then spread as grand an empire to the view,
As history, Time's untiring scribe, e'er knew;
A simpler faith its purer worship aims,
And Vishnu yields in part what knowledge claims.
Then Chivalry his proudest flag unrolled,
And Superstition crowned her kings with gold.
Then solemn priests through awful temples past,
Whose new God excommunicates the last.
Then bannered towers with wild romances rung,
And bards their harps to love and glory strung;
Like moonlight's magic upon sculptures rare,
They showed the true, but made it seem too fair."

The poet now traces the development of this state. The Indian atmosphere fades out. Jones's knowledge of Indian society and culture would seem to be much less than his knowledge of political history. What we are now getting is a modified history of the development of feudalism and from feudalism to capitalism, with increasing poverty and oppression of the masses, a series of revolutions that only lead to another class getting on top and proving worse tyrants than the old. The development begins as in Europe with exploration and foreign trade ventures.

"While thus rude health the growing body warms,
It strikes the earth with fratricidal arms.
Nations, like men, too often are given to roam,
And seek abroad what they could find at home.
They send their armies out on ventures far;
Their halt is – havoc, and their journey – war;
Destruction's traders! Who to start their trade,
Steal, for the bayonet, metal from the spade."

As the narrative progresses and reaches the emergence of the middle and working classes, the reform movement and the Chartist struggles are projected, and this part is particularly interesting for Chartist ideas about their own times and their own problems. Here, too, we find Jones's idea of how the final revolution will take place. Here his major idealist illusions are most apparent: first in the mecha-

[59] T. Spence, *Pig's Meat*, London, 1794, pp. 148–162.

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nical and already old-fashioned idea that history endlessly repeats itself and all nations repeat the mistakes of their predecessors, the old radical history of the succession of mistakes; secondly in the motive and manner of the revolution. One day when the people can go on no longer in the same way, they rise *en masse* and by overwhelming numbers simply sweep away the old order without any struggle or resistance. From then on the vicious circle of repeating mistakes is broken. One by one the other nations of the world awake and finally all are united in a peaceful federation. Basically the weakness arises from Jones's inability to disentangle a clear concept of class struggle from the older ideal abstraction of the "people". In his original preface he explains that at a certain stage before capitalism has grown too strong and the middle- and working classes can combine, a revolution is possible. If the chance is lost there is nothing for it but to wait until capitalism develops into a super-monopoly that again presses masses of the middle-class down the social scale. The people can then again unite and carry through the social revolution. *The Revolt of Hindostan* whatever gaps cannot be bridged in the chain of cause and effect are filled in by God or mysterious natural forces.

Hence this is decidedly a work to study carefully if only to understand better some of the limitations, not of Jones in particular, but of the theoretical foundations of the Chartist Movement, and the reasons why no solution could be found to the problem of how to express solidarity with India in some form of action in 1857.

Some years ago the present writer published a short account of Jones's writings and the end of the Chartist Movement. A more recent and much fuller paper by Gol'man has since appeared which gives a detailed analysis of the articles on India in the early fifties and the influence of Marx on Jones. I think I would fully agree with many of Gol'man's findings. He is certainly correct in saying that at this date, although Jones could not as yet fully grasp the rôle of the proletarian revolution in getting rid of colonialism and the rôle of the colonial peoples as allies of the proletariat, he arrived at an understanding of the need to associate the colonial struggle for freedom with the struggle of the English workers for the Charter and for the winning of power and the eventual socialist revolution[60].

One of the most striking protests in 1858 was another poem which does indeed show a great advance on the earlier approach. It is grimly realistic; it expresses the waste and pity of the war, drives home the lesson of serving a self-destroying capitalism, and does it well.

In the *Revolt of Hindostan* Jones has an episode in which the Company in desperation places an old, neglected officer in command. He answers to the call of duty but his advice is over-ruled, and with inefficient, aristocratic officers and half-mutinous troops, he is defeated and falls in battle. The prototype came from the XVIII century. Jones's version is romantic and even sentimental. Whether

[60] L. I. Gol'man, *O vzglyadah E. Jonsa po kolonial'nomu voprosu*, p. 405, in: *Chartizm: sbornik statey*. Institut Istorii. Academy of Sciences of USSR, *Moscow*. 1961; and P .M. Kemp-Ashraf, *Indian Revolt of 1857 and the Early British Labour Movement* in *India To-Day*, vol. 1, No. 7, Allahabad, 1951.

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Jones's poem had suggested the idea or not, the unknown author of an elegy *On the death of Havelock* took up the theme of the honest commander sacrificed in a bad cause and produced a highly original poem[61].

A short prefatory note explains the image of Havelock – the upright, personally courageous, old-fashioned Puritan soldier. The sincere tribute to the hero, who was popular as a "plain soldier", a "man of the people", is mingled with the reality as the poet sees it, and yet retains all the solemnity of a military funeral in the style of patriotic war poetry. Havelock is suitably buried by the poet with sword and Bible – better such an end than the dishonoured titles bestowed by a corrupt government.

The Death of Havelock.

"Storming o'er the plains of Ind,
Flame-wreath'd to a glorious grave,
Such as heroes seldom find,
Such as monarchs vainly crave;
Dying he hath shunn'd the gift
Dol'd by traitors' sordid thrift,
Shar'd by crawling shame.

Title soil'd by courtier slave,
Better far it reach'd not him;
Lying lips insult the brave,
Gold his blazonry would dim:
He can yield to God, without
Praise from miscreant, fool, or lout –
Mantled in his fame

Havelock's last march is o'er –
Weary lag the dwindled band,
That through carnage' ceaseless roar,
Vengeful swept the redden'd land;
Dark as cypress trembling wave
Their scant plumes now round his grave,
To the fife's shrill knell.

Troubled notes of martial woe
Rolling from the muffled drum,
Footsteps, late so swift, now slow,
Tell of Death with Triumph come;
Lay him in his victor rest,
Sword and Bible on his breast,
Emblems won so well."

[61] *John Brown's Hard Lines*, London, 1858.

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The people, who do not sell titles, are the only source of true honours for the heroes they choose to remember:

"Not of monarchs is the glory
That surrounds a hero's name;
In a people's breast his story
Must be sown to burst in fame;
As the forest oak grows wild,
Bright Renown, the nation's child.
Blooms with unbought grace."

Havelock will never know the mockery that lies behind the show or the contempt with which the ruling class would have treated him if he had lived, but the common soldier, who is thrown into battle without any chance to consult his conscience, will, if he survives, learn the gratitude of his masters – a rather more realistic picture and more likely to go home to the man-in-the-street than Ernest Jones's soldiers who shrink from striking "men God never made their foes".

"Ye have fought as Britons fight,
Soldiers of a victor breed:
Glare of battle is not light
Whereby God's just laws to read;
Be the blood in torrents shed
On the plotter's guilty head,
Heaven assoilzie yours.

Though your prowess shall be told,
Where kings heart with wine are glad,
By the shepherd's lonely fold,
Starlit in his wintry plaid,
Ye must glean a barren gain,
Price of danger, toil, and pain,
While base wrong endures.

For the paltry tale oft told
Shall in England live again –
Silver clasp for deed of gold –
Common badge for common men;
This shall starve, and that shall beg,
Tramper with his wooden leg,
Beggar with his scars.

The false rulers ye have serv'd
Shall insult each soldier deed,
And the breast that never swerv'd,
Be repuls'd where menials feed;

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The aged hound shall have a home,
While the veteran lame shall roam,
Roofless 'neath the stars."

There is a better cause to fight for, though England's lifeblood is drained away to bolster up every rotten despotism.

"Freedom! had he led thy van
To enfranchise half the world
What bright hope had dawn'd on man,
Perjur'd tyranny down-hurl'd;
But his warrior march is o'er,
And his lion heart no more
Bravely beats the time.

Ay, slander those who battle
For Freedom and for Right;

O hideous mock struggle!
In Freedom's name defil'd –
O curst demoniac juggle!
That ardent souls beguil'd –
When Britain's blood like water
Was sold to hellish slaughter
O'er lost Poland's tomb."

Not only war but starvation destroys the people. The first verse below has sarcastic reference to the popular patriotic song of the Highlanders at the relief of Lucknow, and the one on Ireland echoes a similar image applied to 'Ceylon' in *The Revolt of Hindostan*, although this can be found earlier in other radical prose and verse.

"The Scottish laird has driven
His clan across the sea,
Their lowly hamesteads riven
By soulless cruelty;
In requital for the deed,
We may find in our last need
The last Campbell come.

O Erin! gallant nation,
With livid gloom o'ercast,
Thy muster-roll Starvation
Hath shriek'd upon the blast:
Foul dismay scares hellish boast –

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"Statesman!" canst thou lure that host
Back from famine's grave?

When the fierce impending doom
Shall steal on us with surprise,
And from ocean's midnight gloom
The grey legions sudden rise;
Streamers swiftly shooting, whirling,
Bomb-shells of destruction hurling,
Where are those to save?

Where then England's warlike flower?
Where the soldiers of her pride?
Ask of Murder, trick'd in power,
How her chivalry hath died –
Through the stroke of a false pen
Piles of slaughter'd Englishmen
Far off festering lie.

By a miscreant's foul breath sent,
Who hath plann'd each guilty war;
Schemes with doting weakness blent,
'Neath Corruption's baleful star;
Garb'd in mumming Falsehood, see
Treason's hoary debauchee
Ruin ceaseless ply."

It is time to make a clean sweep of this corruption and treachery in high places, of capitalism that has destroyed every vestige of morality, honour and humanity (the reference in the first stanza is to Prince Albert):

"While the cut-throat knave of chance,
Sword-surrounded on his throne,
Hither glares with vulture glance,
Britons, will ye guard your own?
Or succumb a baser prey
For the boast of other day,
That your sires kept well.

Havelock's last march is o'er –
Think now of a nearer foe;
Must the lion tamely roar,
Toothless beast of trader's show?
Or the haughty steed lie down,
Master'd by a circus clown,
As with wizard spell?

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Yet oh! would we first might purge
England of her foes within,
Mix with canting driveller's dirge
Knell of dark connivance' sin,
And an Alien Act decree
That should banish tyranny,
Prince, pimp, peer, and slave."

The concluding stanzas unmask the final mockery of Havelock's heroism, the true image of militarism, the lackey of the new aristocracy of wealth – Wellington and Palmerston in one.

"Yet oh! were the lesson taught
What they are who rule the State,
Knowledge of the evil wrought
By the lordly fools of fate;
Cunning to o'ermaster time,
Wrinkled Nestor of Decline,
Cheating still the grave!

Poisoner of a people's life!
Speak! what added list of crime –
Broken law, and godless strife –
Venom'd swells the bloated time?
Pantaloon, besmear'd with blood,
Fumbling 'neath thy visor'd hood,
Scroll by Demon sign'd.

Traitor! fling thy needless mask
At the feet of bleeding Right;
Too well sped thy treacherous task,
Stand forth in the shuddering light;
What new guilt has birth to-day?
Judas of thy country, say,
Pilate of mankind!"

John Brown, the supposed author of the poem, has seen capitalist society in all its hideousness – the thing born in blood, and could dispel the cant with which the Havelock legend was built up to inflame patriotic feeling and cover up the punitive operations in India.

From the verses quoted above it will probably be agreed that the author was some sort of revolutionary, perhaps a Chartist; that he not only sympathized with the common people but knew how they felt. To judge by his style, occasional grammatical and orthographical lapses, as well as by the rather violent execrations which were characteristic of a good deal of working class verse, it seems probable that the writer was a self-taught worker of some kind. This impression

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is still more pronounced in another poem which he reprinted together with *Havelock*. This other poem might explain his anonymity, for it is a satire of Queen Victoria's wedding, bitterly attacking the royal family and the Prince Consort, and with sardonic realism contrasting royal extravagance with London poverty. It was inspired by an incident when a pauper's funeral somehow got entangled in the wedding procession.

Other expressions of opposition to the Indian war there were and that not confined to Chartists. The activities of socialists and chartists not of Jones's group are usually not mentioned in *The People's Paper*. Co-operative socialists, various small peace societies, utopian communists, and obscure individuals took up the cause, but no organized protest developed on a scale that could be significant. The opposition, including that around Jones in the last stages of the war, lost any revolutionary content it may have had and was channeled into the wider public protest on humanitarian grounds that called a belated halt to reprisals – necessary before the Queen formally assumed imperial sovereignty.

Even so, workers may have regarded this more as a matter of justice than mercy. The reproduction at Plate – is the cover of a poorly printed pamphlet brought out independently by a workingman. The intention was not to exploit sadistic tastes in street literature; the matter inside consists entirely of extracts from official reports of a Commission appointed by the House of Lords to investigate allegations of tortures in India in 1855. The pamphlet seems to have circulated some years later. The short, badly written introduction simply states:

"The refined barbarities of the cruel system of England which begins by squeezing for the lowest wages the greatest amount of sweat and toil out of the bones and sinews of a workingman and ends by incarcerating him on worse than prison fare within the close walls of a workhouse, is bad enough, but the horrors endured by the labouring class of our Indian territories for producing princely fortunes to the Nabobs from the East India Company is too heinous to be tolerated much longer by the enlightened public opinion of this Christian country when it becomes well informed of the facts."[62]

Here in the forthright language of a workingman is the clearest possible expression of solidarity with the "labouring class" in India. Who paid for the printing? A lone individual stung by the sense of common wrong, or a group of class-conscious workers, a club perhaps; or did some goodhearted small printer give credit in the hope that the sales would cover him? It is a chance survival. How much has simply disappeared?

For contrast, Plate – gives an advertisement that was printed in the back of a well known book on India and aimed at the cultured public.[63] It may serve as a sample of the dulled sensibility with which any enlightened effort had to contend nearly throughout the XIX century. If, say, forty years later, no publisher would

[62] Anon.: *Tortures inflicted on the Natives of India by the officers of the East India Company*, London, N. D.

[63] G. C. M. Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India*, London, 1871.

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have dared to print such a thing, the change in social ethics that insisted on some appearance of decency, was the product of a long working class struggle through which maturer concepts of internationalism also emerged.

The connection between workers' wrongs in both countries was noted by another unknown worker called Samuel Owen, who was defended by Reynolds when his public speaking activities were interrupted by the police.[64]

THE HINDOO PANTHEON.

MESSRS. PROCTER & CO.

HAVE in their possession nearly the whole of the HINDOO GODS as Illustrated in this Guide. The FAMINE, which devastated certain parts of INDIA last year, having forced the HINDOOS to part with even their family GODS.

INDIAN ART GALLERY,

185, OXFORD STREET, near Orchard Street.

Plate 2. Advertisement in the original edition of Birdwood's 'Industrial Arts of India'

A factory worker, Edmund Fry, a man of taste and intelligence, published a bold and factual article on the plunder of India and the mockery of suggesting that the conquest of India benefited anybody other than the "capitalists". He lectured at places on the south coast under the auspices of a peace society, and at Essex Hall in London in January, 1858, on "The Conquest and Annexation of India by the Sword", to "respectable audiences".[65]

At a public meeting at Accrington a cotton worker called Cockburn turned the attention of his audience to the connection between the Indian war and the cotton crisis.

"But now when labour is low" he said, "when distress prevails, when provisions are high, when cotton is scarce, when taxes are nearly all doubled, you are involved in war with that great and numerous people."

[64] S. Owen, *The Spiritual Era*, London, (c. 1861.) pp. 6–11.
[65] *Bond of Brotherhood*, Jan.-Feb. 1858.

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He went on to say that although formerly the peoples and religions of India had been divided now the British (note that he does not say the "Company" or the "Government") have succeeded in uniting them and "now by one common effort they are trying to shake off the yoke of Great Britain". They represent an army of 250,000 supported by a population of 170,000,000. The revolt was mainly caused by interference with the established customs of the people, the appropriation of peasant lands and the raising of rents. "Do you blame them for doing their utmost to expel the robber and tyrant who have deprived them of their possessions?" – "Can you change their social arrangements by sending 14,000 British soldiers to butcher the people?" he asked. The war has affected the cotton trade and if the Indian trade is lost for good of course English workers will suffer. "It is therefore time that those who have to suffer should cry out and demand that justice be done to the injured Indian and not meet him with a rifle and shoot him, and when the people of this country once get thoroughly acquainted with the facts, neither Lord Palmerston nor any other member will dare neglect them".[66]

Possibly again this Cockburn who worked in a cotton mill was a Chartist, or perhaps he read *The People's Paper*, but what one would like to know is from where did he get the idea of tackling the Indian situation in this way, i. e. by demanding the restoration of the land?

As far as these fragments tell us anything at all, they show ordinary workers still passing on the watchword of class solidarity with India in a simple form and the fact that people listened to them. Perhaps the anti-Indian hysteria which would seem to have swept the country to judge by the contemporary press was not quite so all-pervading after all. Ernest Jones also gave a survey of the Empire, particularly India, at his 'Evenings with the People' which were apparently well attended.

The only instance known to me of actual labour fraternization of a modern trade union type between Indians and Europeans in the first half of the XIX century, occurred in Australia. Indian coolie labour was imported into the interior to undercut wages. Organized Australian workers made contact with the more or less segregated newcomers and encouraged the Indians to demand equal rates of pay and rations, in which apparently they were successful. An employer who took up the matter with the authorities in India, requested that care should be taken in future to recruit suitable labour, preferably from backward castes and up-country districts. He thought it would also be better if they did not bring their wives with them as the women egged the men on. In particular he never wanted to see any more Bengali Brahmins, probably because they were able to speak English. The point establishes that for these uprooted workers at any rate caste did not make a barrier for labour fraternization.[67]

There are a number of other points which have not been touched on here but certainly need investigation for a clearer understanding of the earlier phase of

[66] *Free Press*, Accrington, Sept. 1857.

[67] P. Friell, *The Advantages of Indian Labour in the Australian Colonies*, London, 1846.

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internationalism. First, there are the international ideas or universalism of the Owenite socialists. Many were simultaneously co-operative socialists and members of Chartist organizations. Small groups of utopian-communists, followers of continental schools of thought, also influenced Chartists from about the mid-forties more perhaps than their actual numbers would suggest.

Chartist and socialist views on nationalism and nationalist movements, the effect of contacts with foreign nationalist leaders, and the Chartists' differentiation of nationalism from democracy which is sometimes referred to, also require attention.

Finally, the attitude to the army underwent a change from about the thirties.

Whatever may be said about the making of judgements by historians they are certainly called upon to provide rational explanations of the political ideas and ethics which they encounter in the past. As the foregoing notes may have shown, the primitive essentials of internationalism and proletarian fraternization were not acquired by the slow education of public opinion (as some labour leaders used to say before 1947 to excuse moderation in colonial demands). They came early, out of the objective situation and the struggles of the emergent proletariat. But good intentions and principles were not sufficient to create a movement capable of consciously changing history. Our aim is not a search for the ten just men that can be found in every capitalist Sodom without being able to avert destruction, but to understand and follow out an historical process, among other things, and to find measures for our legitimate judgements. The policies and aims of those free-trade radicals and liberals concerned with India in the XIX century and the contradictory tendencies among some Indian reformers, including those connected with the foundation of the Congress movement, and other matters important for the history of XIX century India, may be better assessed against the background of facts of this order.

Internationalism was latent in British labour relations; anti-imperialism and national unity in the Indian situation. Neither attained full definition in the XIX century. The way was cleared for British imperial expansion by the suppression of the working-class movement and of the most formidable of all colonial revolts when the Indian War of Independence went down to the swansong of Chartism.

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Recent Trends in the Study of Indian History in India

Gopal Haldar

Indians were always a gifted people but their strange apathy in the past to the writing of history is a puzzle to the world and even to their modern descendants. It may be explained and even contested with ingenious arguments. But the fact remains that history-writing as a conscious attempt at preserving the record and presenting a picture of human affairs was neglected in India until Muslim rulers transplanted the fine Arabic tradition of mediaeval times to India. Thanks to them, the "Pathan" and Mughal period of Indian history – the late K. M. Ashraf worked first on the earlier part of it – do not suffer from such all but total lack of materials as the first and ancient period of Indian history does to the regret of all its students. Even then the native talent of India did not in the mediaeval or Muslim period take to the new art or science with enthusiasm. This has naturally left a gap in our knowledge of the life and times even of their own compatriots. The best of the Muslim historians or reporters were surprisingly objective for their times. But their times did not allow them to be free of all religious and political pride and prejudices. They were members of the ruling class and naturally prevented by these circumstances from having any intimate contact with the life and thought of the people ruled, specially as the people then were mainly "unbelievers". Yet they have left accounts which were highly creditable for their times and highly important for ours, as all students of Indian mediaeval history admittedly realize. What could be more desirable than the account of Al-Beruni or of the survey of Abul Fazl in *'Ain-i-Akbari*? The tradition, however, suffered as Mughal administration with its excellent system of "Waqnis" service collapsed. But it was not totally lost as students of Mahratta history know.

A. Task of "re-discovery"

British rule in India signified India's introduction to modern times and to bourgeois life and thought which quickly developed from phase to phase into imperialism. The East India Company, as traders, wanted from the very first correct and detailed reports of their activities from their servants in India to the authorities in London. Historians of high standing like James Mill and Thomas B. Macaulay were in the Company's service, and some of them took Indian history as their field of study. Along with the growth and changes in the idea of historiography the

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attitude of the British historians of India should also have changed; but on the whole they were marked by one trait. For the sake of convenience this may be called the "imperialist idea", though that term should not be interpreted in a narrow sense. For the British had a strong sense of history; many of them were not without sympathy for the people – at least according to the best of their conscience; and Indology after Sir William Jones offered to the British bourgeois scholars a new field of inquiry and achievement and their scholarly ambition tried to probe it well.

The point, however, to be noted is that a broad historical interest was awakened in British times among the educated section of the Indians. They gradually came forward to participate in the re-discovery of India. It consisted mainly in piecing together materials for the political history of India. From Rajendra Lal Mitra and R. G. Bhandarkar to Jadu Nath Sarkar, K. P. Jayaswal and G. S. Sardesai, we find an increasing number of Indian scholars who by their contributions came to place historical study by Indians on its feet even under the unfavourable conditions of imperialist domination. These conditions explain why Indians were not at first eager to enter the modern field, the British period of Indian history, which for them was not very smooth ground to tread. They were drawn to a remoter past, the ancient and medieval periods, in which the British political authorities had no direct interest. This also explains why Indian historians on the one hand glorified their past – for the past was a spiritual inheritance to draw consolation for the present and inspiration for the future. On the other hand they did not feel inclined on that account to challenge the bourgeois imperialist evaluation of Indians as a spiritual people, i. e. a people lacking in socio-political interests and objective attitude, with an overriding bias for "spiritual" thoughts and a tendency to be lost in subjective speculations. Anyway, a school of Indian historians began to grow in the latter part of the 19th century led by Rajendra Lal Mitra, R. G. Bhandarkar, M. P. Sastri etc. They were mostly devoted to the study of the ancient and mediaeval periods of India, and almost entirely limited that study to political and administrative history, or to unravelling the cultural heritage of the Vedic and Buddhist ages. R. C. Dutt's *Economic History of India* in two volumes, the early British and the Victorian periods, was the first to break new ground and was a remarkable starting-point in a new direction. A near ally was B. D. Vasu, a fearless nationalist historian of the British period, against whom a conspiracy of silence operated among the "professional" historians.

B. From "neutral" to "nationalist" viewpoint

At the risk of over-simplification we might say that the "professional" historians wanted – and still profess – to be "neutral" and dispassionate like scientists in their view of history. But two broad ideas appear to have guided them even when they professed to be unbiassed. The first idea might be called the Static View: Indian life was held to be fundamentally unchangeable. Some were even

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fatalistic in this respect, and some appeared to believe in racial-geographical determinism, i. e. that the mild, tropical climate of India debilitates its permanent residents so as to make India repeatedly a prey to invaders (A. Toynbee's "cyclic theory" was not then so prevalent). The other view might be called the Dynamic View, that change was the law, but that India had a peculiar genius to make the changes in her own way, from conflict to conciliation, to "unity in diversity". The vague idea of a "synthesis" came into vogue among Indian intellectuals in the last decades of the 19th century when they found the challenge of "Western" (bourgeois) life inescapable. In the name of "synthesis" they sought for an eclectic compromise to satisfy their sense of national self-respect and nationalist demand for political transformation (from subjection to self-government). The nationalist tendency, in spite of its profession of an "unbiassed" attitude, became well-pronounced among Indian historians from the beginning of the 20th century, particularly in Bengal and Maharastra, in the study and evaluation of the pre-British past: Indian capacity for compromise and accommodation was accepted as Indian ability for "synthesis".

This (pseudo-Hegelian?) idealistic notion of synthesis, however, was sought to be "put on its feet" after 1930 in historical and similar studies in India, and more and more socio-economic forces were examined to account for political changes in the past. This changed outlook was first evinced by the youthful students of Marxism in India, and K. M. Ashraf was an outstanding figure among them. Lack of materials for the Ancient and Middle periods handicapped them in their study of these periods, and inaccessibility of British official documents prevented any thorough examination of British rule from the same standpoint. Here Palme Dutt's *India To-day* was their guide. At times these young scholars were vaguely dialectical and appeared broadly to be socio-economic historians. Outwardly they were indistinguishable from the nationalist historians whom they also in some ways came to influence. Those seniors, who had also known their William Digby and Dadabhai Naoroji all too well, thus about this time came to modify their attitude and began to underline the exploiting rôle of the imperialist rulers of India.

C. A change – socio-economic studies

The attainment of political freedom in 1947 naturally meant the enthronement of the nationalist school of historians. Their attitude was clearly coloured now by the suppressed sentiments of the last decades. Attention could now be centred on the British period; but history ceased to be in their view merely political history. Economic exploitation was emphasized, but not the operation of the economic forces nor the "class alignments". A minority of students with Marxist tendencies however emphasized the operation of the socio-economic forces more even than that of political ones; particularly so, as they felt that the first part of the Indian struggle, the political part of it, was virtually won and economic freedom remained to be gained. Eminent historians like K. M. Panikkar also streng-

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thened the idea of objective study of modern Indian history from the socio-political aspect. Without exaggeration it may be said that the socio-economic point of view in history has been gaining ground in Indian historiography in recent years (1947–1962). C. H. Philips (U. K.) in his *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* has supplied a useful account of the old and new scholars of these countries in the historical field. Another publication, *Contributions to Indian Economic History* (ed. T. K. Ray Chaudhury, Calcutta) promises to bring every half-year to the notice of those interested the increasing work on that particular side. The publication of the first volume of the *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, sponsored by the Ministry of Scientific Research and Culture, Government of India, and edited by an eminent historian, Tara Chand, bears indirect evidence of this orientation; and, in spite of its lack of warmth and depth, the work may be taken as an indication of the change in the official historiography of India for the same reason.

D. The progressive standpoint – its development

In taking notice of this orientation a student has naturally to take note of the contributions in this direction by the late K. M. Ashraf and his friends, as also of the scholars and researchers who preceded or followed them and strengthened broadly the progressive and near Marxist study of Indian history in general. If R. C. Dutt broke new ground in economic history more systematically than William Digby or Dadabhai Naoroji, the late Bhupendra Nath Dutt can claim a pioneer's honour in the application of the principles of Marxism to the study of Indian history in the ancient period. It was an attempt in a difficult field where scholars like D. D. Kosambi are now at work. But the erudition of Bhupendra Nath Dutt, in spite of his unfortunate discursiveness and repetitiveness, enabled the new school to gain the first, firm foothold. Of course, R. Palme Dutt, though strictly not of the Indian tradition, remains the avowed leader in the study of the British period of Indian history and the Marxist exposition of it. In the thirties, world crisis led to a swing to the left in the Indian intellectual world. The poet Rabindra Nath Tagore stood out as the conscience of his people in the anti-fascist struggle, while Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru followed the poet as a more politically-minded force to lead the people directly in public life. His *Glimpses of World History*, popular and not faultless as a historical survey, served, however, a similar purpose as did H. G. Wells's *Outline of History* in the twenties in some parts of the world. In the thirties Mr. Nehru's approach to world problems was nearest to that of the Marxists. He drew around him intellectuals like K. M. Ashraf, and helped to direct nationalist thinking to objective and even Marxist channels. New ideas began to take shape everywhere in the intellectual world. Hiren Mukerjee in Bengal was a brilliant speaker and writer of Marxist persuasion. Sushobhan Sirkar was an even more powerful force there. Academic rules and service regulations did not allow him to write as much as he taught. From his post

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at the Presidency College, Calcutta, Sushobhan Sarkar helped to mould the ideas of a number of future students of history. His own lecture notes, articles in the press, and his short *Notes on Bengali Renaissance* (under the pen-name of "Amit Sen"), were pointers to young research students in the field. The late D. P. Mukerji of Lucknow University was a similar influence in Uttar Pradesh, and he left a larger sheaf of contributions in different fields. D. D. Kosambi in Maharastra, a brilliant scientist academically and an equally well-trained Indologist by choice, was also waiting at that time to apply his Marxist discipline in the study of ancient Indian history. Besides these academic scholars, there were intellectuals directly connected with the Left Movement (like K. M. Ashraf) who were active in different directions; and many of them were able writers in their own languages and helped to create the Marxist intellectual climate for historical writings.

Out of that scene in the thirties and forties, a large number of scholars have now emerged. Some of them have to their credit training in Europe too, and work today in Indian history with a new attitude to it: e. g. R. S. Sarma (Patna), Romila Thapar (Delhi), A. Tripathi (Calcutta), Tapan Ray Chaudhury, S. B. Ray Chaudhuri, Ranajit Guha, P. S. Gupta, Binay Chaudhuri, to mention only a few who have made their mark. Some again like Ashok Mitra, I. C. S., have stamped the official studies like the Census Reports (1951, 1961) and Gazetteers with originality of thought combined with fierce loyalty to facts. At least one academic historian, N. K. Sinha of the Calcutta University, has worked his way to solid scholarship in his scrupulous and very conscientious study of the early stages of the British Indian economic history (*Economic History of British India*, Vol. I and II). He and his colleagues of the Calcutta University obviously subscribe to no ideology and confine themselves to the study of economic data with thoroughness and without any (Marxist) bias. By no means, therefore, are all new scholars Marxist in their stand.

E. new study course and new trends

The change in the climate of historical studies, however, is accepted. For after the attainment of freedom a new attitude to the study of Indian history different from that which the imperialists had inculcated, was felt to be due by all Indians, by the peoples and their leaders. Some events, like the Indian Revolt of 1857, called for re-examination, and they were not few. A new syllabus for the study of history in schools was thus felt to be a necessity. The task was first untertaken in the State of West Bengal. The recommendations, owing more to S. Sarkar than to any one else, suggested radical changes to bring the whole course of study for history in the Secondary Stage of education into line with such study in progressive countries. This favored a new orientation of studies because an orientation in the view of history and historiography was already in evidence, and naturally the recommendations roused orthodox opposition to change. Textbooks in India bring good profits to private publishing concerns and their writers. The new orientation would demand new intellectual efforts on the part of those mercenary writers, and

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financial investment on the part of their publishers. They resented it. As one of the professional authors of textbooks accused the present writer: "This 'social and cultural forces' is a topic which you and your friends have brought into our history syllabus for school students. Our history writing should have nothing to do with such matters." But they had to yield finally; for the syllabus went through, and today forms, with provisions for transitional accommodation made for teachers and students, the basis of the course of studies in history in the Secondary Schools of West Bengal.

The effort of the thirties, thus strengthened in the forties and also by the attainment of freedom, grew into a clear trend and was a recognized force even in the fifties. The advance continued. *Indian Rebellion: 1857*", edited by P. C. Joshi (New Delhi) showed the attempt to bring together in 'A Symposium', as it is called, the progressive school of historical thinking about that event, while the official publication on the subject, written by an eminent nationalist historian, the late S. N. Sen, put forward from the Indian nationalist point of view a good nationalist and anti-imperialist study of it; and R. C. Majumdar, basing himself almost on the same material as S. N. Sen, produced an equally good volume from the older "unbiassed" point of view to maintain that the "Mutiny" was feudal in leadership and not "national" in character. An advance was marked by another symposium, *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance* (B. C. Pal Centenary volume of 1958), planned again by S. Sarkar, in which progressive thinking applied itself to the study of Bengali cultural awakening. Tara Chand's volume on the Freedom Movement registers that advance to the official headquarters in New Delhi, as we see.

F. Points to remember

A few points remain yet to remember. This orientation, for example, is still far from strong or free from false enthusiasm. Secondly, most of the stalwarts in the field of Indian historical studies – and they are many and capable – stand aloof from this side; and they are undoubtedly doing very good work in their own way, like R. C. Majumdar, the doyen of Indian history, K. K. Datta, A. C. Banerji, to mention casually only a few who are unceasing in their labour in the field of British Indian history. Lastly, the lack of data for the earlier periods, as we know, makes objective study of those periods very difficult, and Marxist study in them more hazardous. Of course, the ground is being cleared there by eminent scholars who silently carry out this preliminary task in a scientific spirit in well-known learned bodies like the Asiatic Society (Calcutta), Bhandarkar Research Institute (Poona), in the Universities and other special societies and organisations, like the Archaeological Department of the Government. Indologists with the new outlook venturing into those fields must be cautious. The examples of the late Bhupendra Nath Dutt or D. D. Kosambi should not only inspire them but warn them too: the task calls for capacity for prolonged and painstaking application and study in addition to scientific training and scholarship.

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An Undelivered Letter

Mulk Raj Anand

My dear Ashraf,

during your lifetime I wanted to write to you a long letter. Unfortunately I never had your address. Sometimes when we met we promised each other that we would keep in touch. But the time in which we lived has been one of harrowing realities which we faced from day to day in our country, and it has been difficult, as you know, to put down records of one's thinking at any given moment. You yourself know this very well because during the first twenty years of your studies you wished to write a history of Medieval India. I don't think you ever got down to doing it, but I know you had written various parts of this narrative. Now, the reason why our conversations, whether they were in the British Museum or in Bombay or in Delhi, remained unfinished has been the fact that such a thing as history is a very long process. You had approached this process in a most remarkable manner and you were busy all those years collecting the source material of Medieval History. Those boxes which were piled up with manuscripts and translations and notes will, I hope, be restored, perhaps partly to the Archives of India when this important work of yours will come to be noticed and studied by younger scholars. A history of Medieval India may be possible to write on the basis of your work. But, unfortunately, the attitude towards history which you had in mind has not been communicated to the new generation. I think the reason why perhaps Jawaharlal seized upon it may have been through conversation with you because in *Glimpses of World History* he did write what seemed to be to many of us, as you know, the essence of history. By the essence of history I mean the kind of writing from which insight into events becomes possible so that that insight can be used for the future to avoid the mistakes of the past and to take those initiatives which may launch us on a much higher plane of activity and thinking in the making of new civilisation. Jawaharlal devoted a good deal of his time to research, although I do not think that he knew many facts. He did succeed in communicating the important junctures with a certain amount of sublimity and he showed exactly how history can be used in his own person. In fact, I believe these books of his – *Glimpses of World History* and *Discovery of India* – were preparations of his work for the future. In the case of the Marxist historians, unfortunately, they never got down to acting upon the kind of material that had become available to them. Of course, it is very difficult to look into a past which is without many records for the social and other causalities which acted upon people,

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and therefore the writing of history about those situations becomes very difficult. All the same Professor D. D. Kosambi followed your method, or something parallel to your method, and succeeded in writing *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History* which will remain a guiding post for many younger people. Now, it is important for people to know that it was your contribution to give this idea that source books should be compiled first, and that insight into history and historical events should become available in order that future action can be guided. I am afraid the emphasis was not clarified by you because you were not able to write down these ideas even in a miscellany essay. I suppose there are such essays somewhere and I hope they will be collected. But the historical moment on which you converged, the idea of taking stock of a situation in the past which can become the catalyst of the argument in the present movement in order to make future developments possible, this idea of the historical moment, was itself difficult to put into the minds of our people. As you know our people have been talking metaphysics, our whole outlook has been unscientific, in many parts of our culture there are only vague generalities, and the whole concept of living in the aeons of time and regarding any historical reality of today as one particle of that enormous time made for a vagueness and amorphousness in our approach to facts. Phantasy also was forbidden, because it is impossible to have imagination playing upon itself; it is only possible to play with imagination upon historical realities. This tendency, the myths and legends which pass for history in India, was part of the phantasy of our previous times when the realities of the situation seemed so forbidding that people took refuge in the ancient myths. Now, that is a process of thinking, of feeling and acting which is still with us in the minds and hearts of many people. It is important for us to tell them of your attitude that the historical moment does not admit of past myths, that you cannot enclose present reality in the shell of the past which does not really belong. I think the other contribution which you have made to our thinking and which has to be recorded is the fact that no single history can be written about a people so vast and complex as the Indian people. Therefore you deliberately evaded the epical history and wrote only a miscellany of essays. This miscellany has to be collected so that we are able to garner from it the taste and the flavour of your real and genuine apperceptions of the historical moment. I hope that when the work of the new generations begins your essays will become available in order to provide for our country a direction to advance in the writing of history. I am afraid the arrogance of many of our historians, which is based upon a weakness in regard to actual knowledge and reliance on foreign historians, will not permit the coming through of your own achievements into the perspective of our times. But it is our hope that some will devote themselves to drawing the essence of your thinking from the major work you have done in your life-time. The emphasis is on the historical moment, the shaping of the present so that with the insight of historical approach to reality you are able to project yourself into the future. The making of India demands that we practise your insights.

Mulk Raj Anand

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II

CULTURE

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Towards a Humanist Appreciation of Indian Art

John Irwin

In one of the articles K. Marx wrote on British rule in India in the 1850's, there is a well-known passage in which he attacks the supposedly 'idyllic' character of the traditional Indian village community. Describing such sheltered and stagnant communities as the foundation of oriental despotism, he included among their attendant evils the fact that they made the human mind an unresisting tool of superstition, thus bringing about "a brutalising worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Hanumān, the monkey, and Sabala, the cow."[1]

It was perhaps not entirely a matter of chance that Marx should have mentioned first among the degrading objects of Hindu worship 'Hanumān, the monkey'. It was precisely at this time that his contemporary William Morris, famous English socialist, poet and artist, came into possession of a bronze image of this same monkey-god. It was probably the first Hindu bronze of aesthetic merit to reach Europe, and Morris had the audacity in the face of much irrational prejudice to proclaim it as a fine work of art. He was so certain that future generations would acknowledge it as such that he gave it to the South Kensington Museum (now known as the Victoria and Albert Museum). In fact, more than half a century passed before his forecast proved correct. To-day this same image (reproduced at Plate 3) occupies an honoured position in the Indian galleries of the same museum.

Looking at this figure objectively and dispassionately, it is now difficult for us to imagine how the mind of the man who conceived it could be regarded as brutalised or degraded. Its 'message' is subtle, and rather than suggesting debasement of man to the level of a monkey it would seem to elevate animal sensibility to a human level. It tells us that Hanumān (divine in origin and superhuman in power) is no mere zoological specimen, yet at the same time shares the character of all monkeys. He is the universal monkey but invested with the aura of human myth. The artist has subtly suggested links between human and animal life – without overtone, because the firmness and skill of execution prohibits sentimentality. No attempt is made to disguise purely monkey qualities such as mischievousness and even latent venom, yet at the same time the figure is instinct with the human

[1] From an article written by Marx on June 10, 1853 and published in the *New York Daily Tribune* of June 25, 1853. K. Marx and F. Engels, *The first Indian War of Independence*, Moscow, 1959, p. 20.

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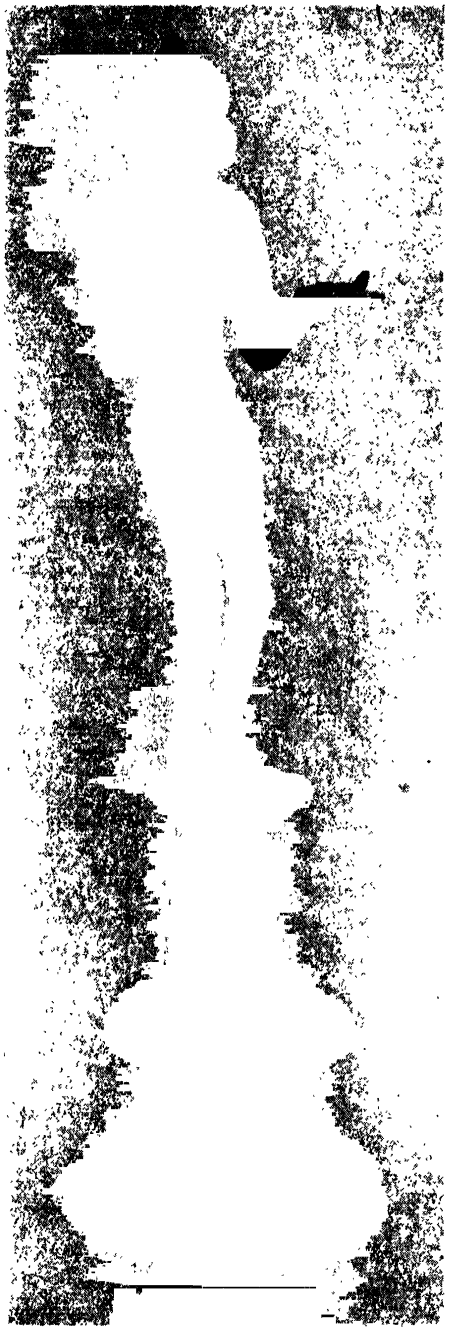
virtues of tenderness and humility. Whether this treatment represents the work of a degraded mind must seem to anybody sympathetic to Marx's analysis of Indian society a highly relevant question.



In stressing the debased nature of Hindu worship, Marx was not of course making a controversial statement but expressing an attitude shared by most European minds of his day. The science of anthropology was unborn, and the science of psychology was remotely in the future. Without the technical experience of evaluating unfamiliar patterns of culture, it was all too easy to recognize "the Savage" in these bizarre and grotesque manifestations – a confusion moreover useful to those who sought to justify colonial wars and annexation as a civilizing mission.

Since Indian religious worship was degrading, and since almost all Indian art existed exclusively to serve religion, it followed that the sculptured monuments of India were without intrinsic virtue and beyond the pale of rational study. This attitude was neatly confirmed in the official handbook to the Indian collections at the South Kensington Museum published in 1880, when the Hanuman bronze had been collecting storeroom dust for twenty years: "The monstrous shapes of the Puranic (Hindu) deities are unsuitable for the higher forms of artistic representation; and this is possibly why sculpture and painting are unknown, as fine arts, in India."[2]

[2] George C. M. Birdwood, *The industrial arts of India: South Kensington Museum Art Handbook*, London, 1880, p. 125.

Plate 3. Figure of Hanumān bronze. From Ceylon, probably X–XII century A. D. Given by William Morris to Victoria and Albert Museum one hundred years ago. Photo: Victoria and Albert Museum

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The first significant change in the Western attitude to Indian art came soon after the turn of the century and coincided with a crucial stage in the growth of the Indian nationalist movement. At this time the movement was dominated by the middle- or professional classes who, having grown up with the desire for Western education, were now feeling resentment on finding that it was not Western education but Western birth that qualified for positions of responsibility and influence. This disillusionment encouraged a reaction against Western values and a return to the neglected indigenous tradition. It was the high period of cultural revivalism, and as a result it was no longer possible for the foreigner to scorn Indian art and religion without exacerbating the already strained relations between rulers and ruled. The more farsighted among the rulers recognized a definite need to foster a positive understanding and appreciation of every aspect of Indian culture which was the subject of national pride.

When in 1910 an eminent member of the Royal Society of Arts spoke disrespectfully in public about a bronze Buddha as "an uninspired brazen image, vacuously squinting down its nose to its thumbs, and knees and toes," the result was an outburst of protest in *The Times*, to which many leading artists and writers of the day lent their support. They insisted that Indian art should be respected "as a lofty and adequate expression of the religious emotion of the people and their deepest thoughts on the subject of the divine."[3]

Such high-mindedness is a long way from Marx's contemptuous reference to brutalising and degrading worship; but in fact they were not describing quite the same thing. In India there had always been two main streams of religion: on the one hand the priestly, Brāhmanic; on the other, popular cult worship at village level, with roots in pre-Āryan tradition. For more than two thousand years these two streams had constantly merged and interacted, without losing their separate identity and quite separate dynamic. The priestly, Brāhmanic tradition expressed itself in Sanskrit literature and philosophy (this was the one aspect of Indian culture which had enjoyed academic respect in Europe from the foundation of Indo-European scholarship at the end of the eighteenth century)[4]. A sophisticated tradition, it had seemed more elevating for study than were the coarse realities of religious worship at the village level. It is understandable, therefore, that those encouraging sympathetic interest in Indian art should try to invest it, by association, with the prestige and respectability of Sanskrit philosophy – India's "deepest thoughts on the subject of the divine." The late Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy, pioneer scholar of Indian art, made this association the foundation of his interpretive studies,

[3] Signatories to the letter included Laurence Housman, Walter Crane, W. R. Lethaby and William Rothenstein. It was published in February, 1910.

[4] There were political reasons for primacy given to literary studies. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the East India Company had found itself with vast new territories to administer, and this was difficult without a basic knowledge of customary law. As the keys to customary law were embedded in Sanskrit literature, the exploration of this field was considered necessary. This was one of the main factors leading to the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784.

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summing up his attitude in the well-known statement that everything India had to offer to the world proceeded from the genius of her philosophers. In other words, art was to be interpreted in literary terms – which meant in practice the mystical and esoteric philosophy of the Vedānta school of Hinduism – and sculpture was to be recognised as the vehicle of a metaphysical symbolism.

The principle message of this tradition of philosophy had always been one of asceticism and withdrawal, the ultimate goal of the individual being escape from earthly existence – to be achieved by self-denial, renunciation, and ultimately 'release', *mukti*. The vitality of Indian art, on the other hand, is chiefly distinguished for its precisely opposite characteristics. The natural voluptuousness of its forms implies an attitude to life as something to be happily accepted without sensuous restraint. The frank observer cannot fail to be impressed with the down-to-earth character of the myths and legends and by the way in which the temporal and the eternal are freely combined. This expresses itself in aesthetic terms as a fusion of cosmic with human, of mystic with sensual.

Contrary to a close association with priestly abstraction and metaphysics, Indian art is redolent of the long-cultivated spirit of a people living in close contact with nature, preoccupied with the season-to-season struggle for existence and familiar with a myth- and ritual-culture of the soil. Even the very form of many Indian temples suggests the dynamic force of plant-forms breaking out from an inner centre, pushing upwards and outwards in the manner of fertile growth. Another fact which will strike the impartial observer is that these characteristics are not the feature of any one religious school but are common to all Indian monuments, whether Hindu, Jain or Buddhist. They transcend the comparatively superficial differences of sectarian iconography and constitute the Indianness of the art.

In face of such contradictory evidence, it is obvious that neither the nineteenth-century assessment of Indian art as debased and degrading, nor the twentieth-century emphasis on metaphysical interpretation and a very high-minded otherwordliness is adequate to meet the facts. A fresh starting-point is needed, which may inspire us to ask in the spirit of Bertolt Brecht: "Who built and carved the monuments?" It certainly was not the priests. We may doubt whether Indian stone-carvers even understood the priestly language, Sanskrit[5].

First among the qualities needed for a great sculptural tradition is technical skill: the physical ability to master and bring to life difficult and inanimate material. Indian sculptors were primarily guild craftsmen. Like those of medieval Europe, Indian guilds were made up of master-craftsmen, journeymen and apprentices. They worked co-operatively, more than one man being engaged on a single image. The attitude of the craftsmen was a professional one, and there is no reason to think that they necessarily shared the sectarian faith of their patrons. In many cases Hindu, Buddhist and Jain monuments were carved by the same hands,

[5] When inscriptions are found on early sculptures, they are only rarely the work of craftsmen whose skill compares with that of the actual image-carvers.

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differences between them being the superficial ones of iconography rather than style. It was not sacrilege for a Buddha figure to be carved by a non-Buddhist: the priest alone gave it sanctity by the subsequently performed ritual of eye-opening *(akṣimocana)* and other rites connected with installation *(pratiṣṭhā)*. The actual carving of the image was a mere prelude – a mundane part of the total operation.

Next it is relevant to ask how Indian sculpture (as we know it) came into being? The qualification 'as we know it' is important, because what we know is only a fraction of the evidence. Our knowledge is only of *stone*-carving, for owing to the agency of the Indian climate, the destructive work of insects and other natural causes, nothing survived of the main bulk of early sculpture which was undoubtedly of wood and unbaked clay.

The long-standing habit of giving religious labels to schools of Indian art and of designating all early work 'Buddhist' has obscured the fact that in the centuries before the Christian era there were two distinct 'Buddhist' schools: the Mauryan or imperial style; and the popular or *stūpa* style of Bhārhut and Sānchī.

The Mauryan Empire, founded from the chaos of the Greek collapse, reached its height under Aśoka (273–232 B. C.) when its territories stretched across the whole of north and central India and extended as far south as Mysore. Aśoka adopted Buddhism two centuries after the death of the founder when it was only one among many heretical movements challenging Brāhman authority and priestcraft. In proclaiming the equality of man and calling on the individual to seek perfection in his own way – irrespective of caste or convention, and without resort to priestly ritual – the Buddhist gospel contained within itself the seeds of a new humanism admirably suited to the intellectual needs of an age of expanding commerce. Moreover, a centralized bureaucratic administration of the Mauryan type required a universal law or code of conduct: Aśoka's *dharmavijaya* or 'conquest through Buddhist Law', in meeting this need, was not merely a missionary movement but a definite imperial policy. The splendid monoliths of polished sandstone upon which the edicts were engraved bear witness to this. But they constitute a self-contained chapter of Indian art without much relevance to future development.

The really crucial and formative phase of early Indian sculpture concerns the second 'Buddhist' school of Bhārhut and Sānchī, where the social basis of both the religion and its art is significantly different. Here Buddhist art had lost its earlier Aśokan character as an art sponsored for imperial ends, because Buddhism itself, in proclaiming the spiritual equality of man and thus opening its ranks to the masses, had made way for a tremendous release of popular forces. The art shows us that these forces were now to transform its original character as a monastic order into that of a popular religion incorporating the beliefs, practices, and modes of worship characteristic of the traditional cults of the soil.

It is well known that the very nature of the shrines themselves were evidence of this process. Before this, the *stūpa* was a primitive tumulus of heretical association to the orthodox mind. Similarly, the *caitya* or temple was also in origin associated with primitive cults. Before it came to mean 'temple', a *caitya* was any piece of

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ground deemed sacred – usually as the abode of earth- or tree-spirits who had power over life and crops. The importance of these spirits or *yakṣīs* in the day-to-day life of the people cannot be overstated. It was greater than any Brāhman or Buddhist conception of the Absolute and largely dominated this early school of 'Buddhist' art. As embodiments of the natural forces of fertility, these earth- or tree-spirits are depicted with all the attributes of desirable earthly women, and their sexual appeal is emphasised. In no other art of the ancient world is there such a sensuously developed yet innocent[6] treatment of the human body. There is no obsession with sex as such, but an uninhibited acceptance of the centrality of sex in the wholeness of human experience and in the sheer joy of living.

The Buddhist monk-philosophers of the same period, however, had no use for the arts and even condemned them along with worldly pleasures. "Beauty is nothing to me," says the author of the *Dasa Dhamma Sutta*, "neither the beauty of the body nor that which comes of dress . . . Form, sound, taste, smell, touch, these intoxicate human beings, cut off the yearning inherent in them." Monks of the early Buddhist brotherhood were expressly forbidden to paint pictures on the walls of monasteries, and the arts of music and dancing were condemned, along with cock-fighting, as undesirable amusements, unprofitable for the wise.

In considering how an art so much in contradiction with the spirit of orthodox doctrine could flourish under a Buddhist label, it is important to keep in mind one radical difference between the development of religious institutions in Europe and in India. Christianity was also challenged by heresies which stemmed from earlier pagan rites (one need think only of the popular themes of reversal, the mimes of mock-king and harvest-lord, the beast masquings, the witch-cults, the Festival of Fools, and so on), but in Europe the centralization and temporal power of the Church were such that these heresies were effectively controlled, even though it sometimes required the exertion of brutal vengeance against them. In India, on the other hand, religious movements such as Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism were neither centralized nor did they achieve the temporal power and organization to enforce orthodoxy, which explains not only the proliferation of gods and goddesses but the great regional diversity of rites and customs.

We begin to reach the core of our subject when we recognize that it was not a mere passive conservatism which made the people cling to their old beliefs with such tenacity. It was part of a process of defiance or social protest, and the basis of this protest was a tension which clearly existed between ruling-class culture on the one hand and popular pre-Āryan modes drawing on the memory of group ritual on the other. To be followed in its full significance, the process must be grasped dialectically. It is a twofold, simultaneous process of acceptance and rejection: the people accept the principle of centralization symbolized by temple and court because of its promise of greater security (in contrast to pre-class society), but at the same time there arises the impulse of rejection – a defiant assertion within the new

[6] The word 'innocent' is used here in its traditional English meaning of 'pure, unpolluted; free from moral sin or guilt'.

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setting – because parallel with the enhanced sense of security is an awareness of increased social division.

A very similar process can be seen at work in Europe, an example being the way in which peasant communities seized on the figure of the Virgin Mary as the Supreme Mother and as a symbol of protest against the Trinity[7]. But when such heresies became a serious threat or embarrassment, the Christian Church acted ruthlessly to suppress them. In India, on the other hand, the priests had no alternative but to compromise – first by tolerating the popular myths and cults and then later, if pressure continued, by assimilating them into orthodox religion. In this way, myths that began as popular heresies usually ended (by the period of medieval Hinduism) as incorporations into orthodox belief, even though modified or transformed in the process to suit Brahman interests.

This process of assimilation-to-kill accounts above all for the fantastic abundance of Hindu deities (the chief subject-matter of Indian art), which are explained by Brāhmans as diverse manifestations of a very few gods. Even the Buddha himself, at first a figure of revolt against Brāhmanism, ended up in Indian tradition as an incarnation of the Hindu god Viṣṇu. First rejected, later tolerated, finally assimilated: such symbols of protest, together with innumerable non-Āryan rituals and customs (such as river-worship, snake-worship, the Śiva cult, and the matrilineal determination of caste) survive as evidence of the way in which popular belief triumphed insidiously over orthodox theology.

[7] Discussing popular inspiration behind the sculptures at Chartres Cathedral, one authority has written: "The Virgin embarrassed the Trinity; and perhaps this was the reason why men loved and adored her with a passion such as no other deity ever inspired. Mary concentrated in herself the whole rebellion of man against fate; the whole protest against divine law; the whole contempt of man for human law as its outcome; the whole unutterable fury of human nature beating itself against the walls of its prison-house, and suddenly seized by a hope that in the Virgin there was a door of escape. She was above law; she took a feminine pleasure in turning hell into an ornament; she delighted in trampling on every social distinction in this world and the next. She knew that the universe was unintelligible to her on any theory of morals, as it was to her worshippers, and she felt, like them, no sure conviction that it was any more intelligible to the creator of it. To her, every suppliant was a universe in himself, to be judged apart, on his own merits, by his love for her – by no means on his orthodoxy or his conventional standing in the Church, or on his correctness in defining the nature of the Trinity." Condensed from Henry Adams, *Mont St. Michel and Chartres*, London, 1934, p. 276. From a slightly different angle, Frederick Engels commented on the social significance of mediaeval religious heresies in *Ludwig Feuerbach*, chapter IV: "The Middle Ages had attached to theology all the other forms of ideology – philosophy, politics, jurisprudence – and made them sub-divisions of theology. It therefore constrained every social and political movement to take on a theological form. To the masses whose minds were fed with religion to the exclusion of all else, it was necessary to put forward their own interests in a religious guise in order to produce a great agitation."

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The art of the Hindu renaissance, which began in the fourth century A. D. and reached its climax about the tenth century A. D., obviously owes more to the influence of temple and court than earlier 'Buddhist' art which is strongly secular in emphasis. Yet its actual dynamic remains the same. Buddhist and Hindu deities are now commonly conceived as kings and depicted in the mode of contemporary court life – lavishly jewelled, embellished and surrounded by their concubines; but to understand the reason, we have to remember that in the Gupta period (320–490 A. D.) kingship played an historically progressive role in uniting India after centuries of foreign invasion. The court also played the main role in unifying India culturally and in patronising the arts (which in Europe had been mainly played by the Church). Therefore in the popular imagination ideals of earthly abundance were identified with images of royal ease and splendour, and the heavens were envisaged as supramundane palaces furnished with the luxuries of mundane court life.

The early medieval period is also the one period when it is valid to draw parallels between art and certain Sanskrit literature, not because craftsmen were following the writings of the Brāhmans but because literature itself borrowed from popular sources. For instance, the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana epics, which provide much of the subject-matter for medieval art, were at this time committed to writing and given the forms in which we know them today – a conscious effort to revive the heroic traditions of an earlier culture and to make them serve the new ideal of a centralized India. Another striking parallel is the literature of the Purānas, in which popular folklore is freely drawn upon but at the same time rationalized and given formal sanction by the philosophical mind.

Looking at Indian art in this light, we begin to understand why the image of an Indian monkey-god, far from reflecting a brutalized mind or imagination, embodies within it the nearest thing to humanist aspiration working within the context of an oppressive, caste-ridden social order. The Hanumān bronze at Plate 3 in fact symbolizes the thriving popular mind and its minor revenges on the powers-that-be. Even idealization of animal life has its own significance in this context if we recognize its source in the age-old Indian folk-belief in reincarnation – with its idea that in another life the individual might be re-born in animal form. Along with this arose the intuition of the unity of all life so wonderfully expressed in Indian sculpture in every period.

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An Introductory Note on Indian Idealism

DEBIPRASAD CHATTOPADHYAYA

There are, it is true, people still reverentially disposed to the story of the immaculate conception, as there are of course those who believe that true philosophical wisdom is but some kind of divine communication. It will perhaps not be a mark of serious preoccupation to judge the comparative credulity of the two fictions. But it will be unwise to ignore the special difficulties created by the latter for a sober understanding of the Indian philosophical tradition. For it was this claim of being essentially revealed from which our idealistic outlook always sought its sanction and its authority, its grandeur and its aura. In a sense, indeed, that was only to be expected. Designed above all to despise the material world and invoked at every step to pretend that the evils and iniquities therein were after all unreal, how could idealism find its ultimate justification in the world itself? It could as well be contended that the usurper sought support from the usurped, the hangman from the condemned. Idealism had thus only heaven to fall back upon. Nothing short of a miracle could completely undermine the mundane[1].

This pretension to a divine genealogy of the idealistic outlook is intriguing. Evidently it was intended to cover up its real genealogy, which, as we shall see, was neither healthy nor holy. The cupboard had a corpse to hide. Before opening it, however, we may take a closer look at the cupboard itself, i. e. to see how persistent the myth of the divine sanction for idealism had in fact been.

The idealistic philosophy that enjoys the widest popularity both in and outside our academic circle is popularly called the Vedānta, though more strictly its name is the Advaita Vedānta. Its main point is that the Self, in the sense of pure consciousness, is the only reality or Brahman and as such the material world does not exist. The decisive proof in favour of this view, as claimed by its foremost representative Śaṃkara, was that it was based upon direct revelation as embodied in the Upaniṣads. Here is how Dasgupta sums up his position: "Śaṃkara's method

[1] Notwithstanding the wide variety of the definitions of idealism offered by the modern idealists (See, e. g., A. C. Ewing, *Idealism: A Critical Survey*, London, 1934, Introduction), I prefer to follow Engels and take it to mean any philosophy that attributes primacy to the spirit, and this as contrasted with materialism, the philosophy that attributes primacy to nature. That even some non-idealists in Indian philosophy too sought scriptural support in favour of their views does not disprove my point, which is that for the idealists it was *a necessity* while for others it was not.

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of explaining the absolutist Vedānta creed does not consist in proving the Vedānta to be a consistent system of metaphysics, complete in all parts, but in so interpreting the Upaniṣad texts as to show that they all agree in holding the Brahman to be the self and that alone to be the only truth. . . . Reason with Śaṃkara never occupied the premier position; its value was considered only secondary, only so far as it helped one to the right understanding of the revealed scriptures, the Upaniṣads . . . From his own position Śaṃkara was thus not bound to vindicate the position of the Vedānta as a thoroughly rational system of metaphysics. For its truth did not depend upon its rationality but on the authority of the Upaniṣads"[2].

Of course, it needs too much veneration for these texts to see a single philosophical view being consistently worked out throughout all the Upaniṣads. "That the Upaniṣads teach not one but various systems", observed Bhandarkar[3] "must follow from the fact that they are compilations, just as the *Ṛgvedasaṃhitā* is". "If anything", says Thibaut[4], "is evident even on a cursory review of the Upaniṣads – and the impression so created is only strengthened by a more careful investigation – it is that they do not constitute a systematic whole . . . Not only are the doctrines expounded in the different Upaniṣads ascribed to different teachers but even the separate sections of one and the same Upaniṣad are assigned to different authorities". There is thus an obvious risk in subscribing to Deussen's[5] view that "all the Upaniṣads treat of the same subject, the Brahman and the Ātman". Not that the Upaniṣads do not treat the subject. As a matter of fact, the doctrine of the Brahman and Ātman did have a predominating importance in the texts. Still it is important to remember that "their inner structure reveals that they are heterogeneous in their material and compound in their composition"[6], that in these "the various strands of thought are almost inextricably interwoven and the teaching presented is with difficulty reduced to self-consistency"[7].

In this medley of metaphysical or proto-metaphysical speculations of the Upaniṣads what particularly interests us here is the one that contained the potentials of the later Advaita philosophy or Indian idealism in its finally extravagant form commonly associated with the name of Śaṇkara. Of course, Śaṃkara himself persistently claimed that this philosophy was nothing but a systematic elaboration of the fundamental teaching of the Upaniṣads. Historically, however, this can be accepted as true only when we take into consideration the contribution of some Buddhists who intervened between the Upaniṣads and the Advaita philosophers, because it was in their hands that the idealistic outlook naively posed in the Upaniṣads underwent its first philosophical transformation. As a matter of fact, practically everything that was philosophically worthwhile in the later Ad-

[2] S. N. Dasgupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. I, Cambridge, 1922, p. 434.
[3] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, Etc.*, Straßburg, 1913, p. 1.
[4] G. Thibaut, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 34, Intro. p. CIII.
[5] P. Deussen, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, Berlin, 1907, p. 22.
[6] R. E. Hume, *Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads*, London, 1951, p. 7.
[7] A. S. Gaden, in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, (ed.) J. Hastings, Edinburgh, 1908–18, XII, 541.

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vaita version of Indian idealism was already evolved by these Buddhists. They are generally known by their self-styled distinction, the Mahāyānists or the followers of the Great Vehicle, as contrasted with the earlier Buddhists who were despised as the Hīnayānists or the followers of the Lower Vehicle. The so-called Mahāyānists developed two new schools of philosophy, called the Mādhyamika and the Yogācāra, defending the idealistic outlook in two ways, known respectively as the Śūnyavāda (doctrine of the void) and Vijñānavāda (the doctrine of the sole reality of the mind).

Śaṃkara himself, with all his bitter though essentially sectarian animosity[8] for these Buddhists, did in fact draw so much upon them that he was rightly characterized as merely a disguised Buddhist[9]. A sharp religious frontier, in other words, did not prevent a largescale smuggling of philosophical formulations. Interestingly, the same was true of the Mahāyānists themselves. They did, no doubt, receive the basic clues to their world-denying philosophy from the Upaniṣadic texts. But a frank admission of this was as difficult for them as it was for Śaṃkara to acknowledge his indebtedness to these Buddhists. For the Upaniṣads were after all Brahmanical scriptures with which the Buddhists could have formally nothing to do.

Nevertheless, as representatives of the idealistic philosophy, these Buddhists too had after all to show some kind of divine sanction or scriptural authority for their own standpoint. This proved to be a peculiarly difficult problem for them. The founder of their creed was after all an historical person, a human being who, moved by the sufferings of his fellow beings, preached a religion "to bring quietude of heart"[10] by "subduing the mental intoxicants that are generated even in this present life"[11]. He was therefore too realistic to indulge in or encourage any useless metaphysical speculation[12] or even to have a belief in God, the prayers and sacrifices to whom could be recommended as a remedy for human miseries. The Buddha's own emphasis was essentially on the right understanding of suffering

[8] T. Stcherbatskoy, *Buddhist Logic*, Leningrad, 1932, vol. I, pp. 21–22.

[9] The phrase *pracchanna bauddha* was quoted by Vijñābhikṣu in his Introduction to the *Sāṃkhyapravacanabhāṣya* from the *Padmapurāṇa*. Madhva, in his *Aṇubhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtra* II, II. 29, bluntly said that the *brahman* of the Māyāvādins was nothing but the *śūnya* of the Śūnyavādins. Others to have sarcastically referred to the basic similarity between the Advaita Vedānta and the Mahāyāna Buddhism were Pārthasārathimiśra (*Śāstradīpikā*, Nir. ed., p. 111), Jayantabhaṭṭa (*Nyāyamañjarī*, Chow. ed. II, 96), etc. Among the modern scholars who have discussed the question elaborately are V. Bhattacharya in *IHQ*, X. pp. 1–11; H. Jacobi in *JAOS*, pp. 51 sqq; L. de la Vallée Poussin in *JRAS*, 1910, pp. 128 sqq; T. Stcherbatskoy in *The Conception of Buddhist the Nirvāṇa*, Leningrad, 1927, p. 36 and S. N. Dasgupta in *History of Indian Philosophy*, I. pp. 423 sqq.

[10] *SBE*, XIII. 84.

[11] T. W. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol. IV, London, 1921, p. 121.

[12] The Buddha's own distaste for metaphysics has in fact been widely discussed by the modern scholars.

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and the way out of it, which consisted mainly in the observance of certain codes of conduct. Moreover, much to the disadvantage of the so-called Mahāyānists, teh Budda's explicit distaste for metaphysics was already codified in the canonical literature of the Buddhists before the human personality of the Buddha was washed away from historical memory.

In these circumstances, what could the Mahāyānists do to invent a divine sanction for their idealistic metaphysics, and this from the Buddhistic point of view? Apparently they were left with no other alternative than to tamper with the historical facts and fabricate scriptural texts.

The exact origin of the Mahāyāna may still be a matter for further historical research. But we cannot reject outright the view persistently asserted in the Buddhist tradition that the Mahāsāṃghikas – the monks that were the first to break off from the orthodox creed about a hundred years after the death of the Buddha – were the real forerunners of the Mahāyāna. Theologically the main point of departure of these Mahāsāṃghikas was the theory of Lokottara Buddha which they evolved. They refused any longer to believe that the Buddha was an historical person, a human being; he was conceived instead as essentially supernatural or a veritable deity. The Mahāyānists carried this tendency further and in their view the Buddha became virtually the God. New biographies had accordingly to be manufactured to wash away with myths and superstitions the historicity of the Buddha. This was done in the Mahāvastu and the Lalitavistara, of which the first could be a Mahāsāṃghika work but the second was characteristically Mahāyāna.

In this as in many other respects the Mahāyāna represented a complete break with the spirit of original Buddhism. Here is how Stcherbatskoy describes the break: "When we see an atheistic, soul-denying philosophic teaching of a path to personal Final Deliverance, consisting in an absolute extinction of life, and a simple worship of the memory of its human founder, – when we see it superseded by a magnificent High Church with a Supreme God, surrounded by a numerous pantheon and a host of Saints, a religion highly devotional, highly ceremonious and clerical, with an ideal of Universal Salvation of all living creatures, a Salvation by the divine grace of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, a Salvation not in annihilation but in eternal life, – we are fully justified in maintaining that the history of religions has scarcely witnessed such a break between the new and the old within the pale of what nevertheless continues to claim common descent from the same religious founder"[13].

Two things were obviously needed to substantiate the claim of continuity of the Mahāyāna with the original teachings of the Buddha. These were the fabrication of myths and the fabrication of scriptural texts. The Mahāyānists did both. They denied that the Mahāyāna was "anything save the true doctrine of the Buddha, which, however, as too important and abstruse was not made known generally by the master, a fact which accounts for its non-appearance in the Pāli canon or at

[13] T. Stcherbatskoy, *The Conception of the Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 36.

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least for its comparative insignificance"[14]. They spread the rumour that the "Buddha had preached a higher truth to a select few and that this truth was to be revealed after a passage of five centuries after the Nirvāṇa, i. e. the higher truth was to be propagated only when the believers had practised the lower truth"[15].

The reference to the five centuries after the Nirvāṇa was quite pointed, because round about this time there came into being – mysteriously though it was – a number of scriptural texts supporting the Mahāyāna position. Written in hybrid Sanskrit, these are called the *Mahāyāna-sūtras*. The more important of these are the *Prajñāpāramitā*, *Samādhirāja*, *Laṅkāvatāra*, *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, etc. which, although called *sūtras*, were actually written in verse and running prose rather than in the style of cryptic aphorisms. Though containing much of proto-philosophical declaration, these appear to us to-day to be on the whole more a mass of quasi-mystical theology, the main purpose of which was to make a cult of the Buddha, the God, with *karuṇā* (compassion) and *bodhi* (enlightenment); by the act of worship this compassion of the Buddha could be aroused to bring about the universal salvation. This is how the Buddha's own denial of God recoiled back on Buddhism, and the Māhāyana became in fact the Vehicle for all sorts of superstitions.

To soothe an uneasy conscience caused by attributing high scriptural authority to these late texts, the Mahāyāna Buddhists started to believe in right earnest that the books had not actually come into being abruptly. They were imagined to be actually surviving among some jungle tribe called the Nāgas. While Nāgārjuna, the first great champion of the Mahāyāna, dissatisfied with his own former affiliation to the more orthodox standpoint (Sarvāstivāda), wandered as a pilgrim student from the Himalayas to the seas, in the course of these sojourns he came across the records of the Transcendental Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*) as preserved among the Nāgas "To use modern language, we can say that Nāgārjuna discovered the records of the Buddha's secret sermons called *Prajñāpāramitā* among an obscure tribe with serpent totem"[16]. Could it really be that Nāgārjuna was the real author of the *Prajñāpāramitā* and the myth of his discovering it was designed only to cover up this fact? In any case, this much is certain that the philosophical position for which Nāgārjuna developed his characteristic dialectical defence was, in the *Prajñāpāramitā*, "neatly packed into a magic formula" and dogmatically presented on the authority of the Buddha.

Along with all the theological dogmas a strong proto-metaphysical tendency showed itself in the *Mahāyāna-sūtras*, which, much in the manner of echoing the Upaniṣadic idealism, wanted clearly to undermine the felt reality of the physical world. This felt reality, called *saṃvṛti satya* (empirical truth), was real only from the point of view of our practical existence and had no ultimate validity or *pāramārthika satya* (transcendental truth). From this world-denying emphasis of the

[14] A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, Oxford, 1923, p. 217.
[15] *Rgyan-Drug Mchog-Guyis*, Sikkim, 1962, p. 30.
[16] Ibid., p. 26.

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Mahāyāna-sūtras there finally emerged two schools of idealistic philosophy, the Mādhyamika and the Yogācāra, both established on the secure foundation of scriptural authority, however laborious might have been the manner in which the Mahāyānists invented it.

This, in short, is the history of Indian idealism. It was first clearly, though naively, posed in one trend of the Upaniṣadic speculations. It was next taken up and repeated in a dogmatic manner in the *Mahāyāna-sūtras*. The Mādhyamikas, and after them the Yogācāras, evolved for it a systemic philosophical defence. Finally, it was given the widest popularity in the orthodox Brahmanical circles by the Advaita Vedantists like Śaṃkara and his preceptor Gauḍapāda. At each step of its development, however, the idealistic outlook sought its ultimate sanction in divine authority or scriptural revelation.

Much is of course written by our modern scholars to establish all sorts of differences between the idealistic philosophies, particularly of the Mahāyāna Buddhists and the Advaita Vedāntists. From the point of view of the modern materialist, however, these differences are not so momentous. The family quarrel between the idealists themselves often appears, in Lenin's words, as "a dispute between a man who believes in a yellow devil and a man who believes in a green devil" [17]. "Thousands of shades of varieties of philosophical idealism are possible" he says, "and it is always possible to create a thousand and first shade; and to the author of this thousand and first little system what distinguishes it from the rest may appear to be momentous. From the standpoint of materialism, however, these distinctions are absolutely unessential. What is essential is the point of departure" [18].

What, then, was this point of departure? For the purpose of seeing it clearly we may go back to the earliest manifestation of the idealistic outlook in Indian philosophy, i. e. to the Upaniṣads. There is a peculiar advantage in doing this. For these were the days of proto-philosophy and the thinkers then did not much bother to use subterfuges and critical manoeuvres to conceal the raw consequences of their standpoint. Rather, by boldly defending everything about the idealistic outlook, they enable us to see somewhat clearly where this philosophy came from and where it proposes to lead us.

Of the principal Upaniṣads, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya* are considered to be the most important. Those portions of the former, again, where a certain Yājñavalkya is recorded to have discussed proto-philosophical questions, are considered to be highly significant. We may therefore begin with these.

Declared Yājñavalkya: "Lo, verily, it is the Self (*ātman*) that should be seen, that should be hearkened to, that should be thought of, that should be pondered on . . . Lo, verily, with the seeing of, with the hearkening to, with the thinking of, with the understanding of the Self, this world-all is known" [19]. In the *Chāndogya,*

[17] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 280.

[18] Ibid., p. 275.

[19] *Bṛ. Up.* II. 4.5. Translations of the Upaniṣadic passages quoted are mostly based on R. E. Hume.

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again, no less a figure than Prajāpati, the creator of the world, was made to make a similar declaration: "The Self (*ātman*), which is free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, hungerless, thirstless, whose desire is the real, whose conception is the real, – he should be searched out, him one should desire to understand. He obtains all worlds and all desires who has found out and who understands that Self"[20]. But why was the knowledge of the Self considered to be so supremely important? Prajāpati did not care to answer. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, however, Yājñavalkya offered an interesting defence in favour of this total withdrawal of interest in everything external to the purely internal, from everything in the world to the self alone. "Lo, verily, not for the love of the husband is a husband dear, but for the love of the self is the husband dear. Lo, verily, not for the love of the wife is the wife dear, but for the love of the self is the wife dear. Lo, verily, not for the love of the sons are the sons dear, but for the love of the self are the sons dear. Lo, verily, not for the love of the wealth is the wealth dear, but for the love of the self is the wealth dear". And so on about everything. As Yājñavalkya summed up, "Lo, verily, not for the love of all is all dear, but for the love of the self all is dear"[21].

To us this may sound like some kind of psychology or ethics. What Yājñavalkya intended to discuss, however, was metaphysics. It followed for him therefore that the self was the reality behind everything, and as such, he who knew the self knew everything; he who knew anything apart from the self had only ignorance instead. "Everything has deserted him who knows everything in aught else than the self. This Brahminhood, this Kṣatrahood, these worlds, these gods, these beings, everything here is what this self is"[22]. With a series of somewhat clumsy metaphors he proceeded to explain how the self being the reality about everything, nothing could be grasped without grasping the self, or, by grasping the self alone everything else could be grasped. "It is – as, when a drum is being beaten, one would not be able to grasp the external sound, but by grasping the drum or the beater of the drum the sound is grasped". So also were the sounds of the conch-shell and of a lute. Presumably everything in the world was viewed as but some kind of emanation of the self, just as the sounds of the musical instruments were but emanations thereof. But what was the nature of this Self by grasping which one could thus grasp everything in this world? Yājñavalkya described it as the great being (*bhūta*), which was only a mass of consciousness (*vijñānaghana*): "this great being, infinite, limitless, is just a mass of consciousness"[23].

This mass of consciousness, raised to the status of the ultimate reality, meant first of all a condemnation and rejection of what we call knowledge in our ordinary lives. Thus in the *Chāndogya*[24], Nārada approached Sanatkumāra and confessed: "Sir, I know the *Ṛgveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, the *Atharvaveda* as the

[20] *Ch. Up.* VIII. 7. 1.
[21] *Br. Up.* II, 4. 5.
[22] Ibid. II, 4. 6.
[23] Ibid. II, 4. 12.
[24] *Ch. Up.* VII. 1. 2.

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fourth, Legend and Ancient Lore (*Itihāsapurāṇa*) as the fifth, the Veda of the Vedas (i. e. grammar), Propitiation of the Manes, Mathematics, Augury, Chronology, Logic, Polity, the science of the gods, the science of sacred knowledge, Demonology, the sciences of rulership, Astrology, the science of snake-charming and the fine arts. This I know, Sir". The list was presumably exhaustive, i. e. these were all the branches of knowledge then cared for, because these were mentioned in the other passages of the Upaniṣads where an enumeration of the branches of knowledge was made. What deserves to be particularly noted is that Nārada, with the knowledge of all these, felt fundamentally dissatisfied and approached Sanatkumāra for true wisdom. And the first thing that Sanatkumāra declared was that the knowledge of all these branches was but mere names (*nāma eva*). "Is there, Sir, more than name?" asked Nārada. For the Upaniṣadic idealist there certainly was, and to help Nārada to realize it, Sanatkumāra led him finally to the understanding of the Infinite (*bhūmā*), by which of course was meant the self as the ultimate reality. "Here on earth people call cows and horses, elephants and gold, slaves and wives, fields and abodes, 'greatness'. I do not speak thus; I do not speak thus . . . That (infinite) indeed is below. It is above. It is to the west. It is to the east. It is to the south. It is to the north. It indeed is this whole world . . . I, indeed, am below. I am above. I am to the west. I am to the east. I am to the south. I am to the north. I, indeed, am this whole world . . . The self, indeed, is below. The self is above. The self is to the west. The self is to the east. The self is to the south. The self is to the north. The self, indeed, is this whole world".

We do not find here much effort at philosophical analysis. The thesis is rather presented in the form of what the idealists would call mystical intuition. Nevertheless, we have here all the potentiality of a philosophical outlook that could stand to condemn and reject not only all branches of human knowledge and all the normal faculties of knowing, but also the reality of the world and of life itself. It could thereby become the decisive impediment to science and progress. In the name of the highest knowledge it could, and, as we shall see, it did develop into a philosophy, which, by reducing nature to a phantom of imagination and by pronouncing all the normal sources of knowledge to be intrinsically invalid, had to go against all efforts at mastering and knowing the secrets of nature. In short, the claim to the highest illumination passed into its opposite.

It is interesting to note here how Deussen, with his own pronounced sympathy for the idealistic outlook, is clearly pleased with the above negativistic attitude of the Upaniṣads. "Very soon, however", he says, "it came to be realized that this knowledge of *brahman* was essentially of a different nature from that which we call knowledge in ordinary life. For it would be possible, like Nārada in the *Chāndogya*, to be familiar with all conceivable branches of knowledge and empirical science, and yet to find oneself in a condition of ignorance (*avidyā*) as regards the *brahman*. This thought, though originally purely negative, became in the course of time more and more positive in its character. It was negative in so far as no experimental knowledge led to the knowledge of the *brahman*; and it was positive in so far as the consciousness was aroused that the knowledge of empirical reality was

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an actual hindrance to the knowledge of brahman. This conception of *avidyā* was developed from the negative idea of mere ignorance to the positive idea of false knowledge. The experimental knowledge which reveals to us a world of plurality where in reality only *brahman* exists, and a body where in reality there is only the soul, must be a mistaken knowledge, a delusion, a *māyā*. This is a very noteworthy step forward. It is the same which Parmenides and Plato took when they affirmed that the knowledge of the world of sense was mere deception, which Kant took when he showed that the entire reality of experience is only apparition and not reality. It is of the greatest interest to follow up the earliest foreshadowings of this thought in India, and to trace how the term *avidyā* passed from the negative idea of ignorance to the positive idea of a false knowledge"[25].

Thus, according to the earliest foreshadowing of the idealist outlook, any tendency to acknowledge the validity of what were normally considered to be the organs of valid knowledge brought in its wake the danger of attributing reality to the material world, inclusive of the human body. Hence the need was felt by the later idealists to develop strong philosophical grounds for rejecting the *pramāṇas* or the sources of valid knowledge. The first to have done so with great enthusiasm and considerable dialectical ingenuity was Nāgārjuna, the founder of the Mādhyamika school. One of his main theses was that perception, inference, etc., – in short, the cognitive organs as such – were intrinsically unsound. This was his *pramāṇa-vidhvaṃsa-vāda*, the doctrine of the demolition of the pramāṇas. This he frankly considered to be essential for rejecting the reality of the world. The sources of valid knowledge once demolished, there could no longer be any question of any object of valid knowledge, i. e. of anything perceived or inferred being proved real. As such the philosopher could freely proclaim that excepting his mystical *śūnyatā* or THE VOID – which was of course not ordinarily apprehended and which at any rate does not convey any clear meaning for us – all things ordinarily or uncritically accepted as real were simply phantoms of the imagination.

We may have here some idea of how Nāgārjuna[26] argued his case. If things known are claimed to be proved by well-recognized cognitive organs like perception, inference, etc. then the question will obviously be asked as to the validity of these cognitive organs themselves. If no defence of the validity of these cognitive organs can be offered, then the original claim that things are proved by the cognitive organs will have to be abandoned. If, on the other hand, the validity of the cognitive organs is claimed to be proved, the claim can only be based on the evidence of some other organ validating these cognitive organs. In such circumstances the question will again arise as to the validity of this supposed validating organ. And so on, until one takes resort to a vicious infinite regress. "If the chain of the cognitive organs as vehicles of proof be extended without limit in the infinite past, there would be no primary cognitive organ whose validity can be considered to be established. There being no primal cognitive organ secure in its validity, the

[25] P. Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, Edinburgh, 1906, pp. 74–75.
[26] *Vigrahavyāvartānī*, verses 31 sqq.

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succeeding organs, which are supposed to derive their validity from their predecessors, will themselves be assailed by authentic doubt. The consequence will be that no selection can be made, from this infinite chain, of any one, either in the beginning or in the middle or in the end, as being securely established in its validity"[27].

Nāgārjuna's polemic, it is said, was directed against the logicians in particular. What he wanted to prove was that logic – or more properly epistemology – was not possible. This way of putting his point, however, may amount to some kind of academic cover-up for the reckless and ruinous consequences of the idealistic outlook. For as a matter of fact the rejection of all the cognitive organs meant the undermining of the foundation of positive science as such. The general idealistic position, indeed, demands this. Science and idealism do not go together[28]. Of course, by way of offering some kind of consolation to the needs of science, our idealists were never tired of saying that this rejection of the cognitive organs was proposed only from the point of view of final truth or metaphysical reality (*pāramārthika satya* or *pāramārthika sattvā*); within the general framework of our empirical existence, however, i. e. from the point of view of the sheer pragmatic truth (*saṃvṛti satya* or *vyavahārika sattva*), these cognitive organs served their purposes. This standpoint of the pragmatic or empirical truth as contrasted with the ultimate or metaphysical truth once admitted, efforts could easily be made by the extreme idealists to explain away the glaring absurdities involved in their philosophical stand[29]. Every grain of positive knowledge – science and even common sense – with which idealism was fundamentally incompatible, could now

[27] S. Mukherji in *Nava-Nalanda Mahavihara Research Publication*, I, 22.

[28] Natural science, as Lenin says, instinctively subscribes to the materialistic theory of knowledge (*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, p. 69). On the other hand, as he shows, idealism is easily routed by such questions of elementary science as: "Does man think with the help of the brain?", "Did nature exist prior to man?" etc. For the answer to the claim that modern science, by eliminating matter, has made room for idealism, Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* remains the philosophical classic; for the continuation of the same line of thought with regard to the development of science after Lenin, see J. D. Bernal's *Science in History*, London, 1954.

[29] The differentiation between the standpoints of philosophical truth and of practical life had indeed been typical of the idealists. Cf. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, p. 141: "'That is the fundamental defect of idealism: it asks and answers the question of objectivity and subjectivity, of the reality or unreality of the world, only from the standpoint of theory' (Feuerbach). Feuerbach makes the sum total of human practice the basis of the theory of knowledge. He says that idealists do of course also recognize the reality of the *I* and the *Thou* in practical life. For the idealist 'this point of view is valid only for practical life and not for speculation. But a speculation which contradicts life, which makes the standpoint of death, of a soul separated from the body, the standpoint of truth, is a dead and false speculation'. Before we *perceive*, we breathe: we cannot exist without air, food and drink".

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be accomodated within the general framework of the idealistic outlook as enjoying its own peculiar kind of truth. This was, of course, an obvious subterfuge and Kumārila[30], a staunch opponent of idealism in Indian philosophy, wanted sharply to expose it. All this talk of "pragmatic truth which was after all untrue", he said, was plain humbug. For that which was true was true and that which was not true was not so. But instead of this frank admission the idealists fabricated only cumbrous terminologies and said that there were two kinds of truth, one real the other false. What was true from the practical point of view was, according to the idealists, after all false. What else but simple deception could be their motive for calling it "some kind of truth which was after all false"? Instead of the word *lālā*, the simple Sanskrit for "saliva", one could as well use the word *vaktṛāsava*; similarly, instead of simply saying "false" the idealists were using the complicated expression "truth that was ultimately untrue", or truth within the framework of falsity.

Incidentally, this distinction between mere pragmatic truth and ultimate or metaphysical truth, like the doctrine of the instrinsic invalidity of the cognitive organs as such, was borrowed by the Advaita Vedāntists from the Mahāyāna Buddhists *in toto*. Only their sectarian hatred for the Buddhists prevented them from making a frank confession of the fact. This was particularly obvious in the case of Śaṃkara. As against the Mādhyamika school of Nāgārjuna he indignantly remarked, "The third variety of Buddha's doctrine, viz. that everything is empty, is contradicted by all means of right knowledge, and therefore requires no special refutation. For this apparent world, whose existence is guaranteed by all the means of knowledge, cannot be denied, unless some one should find out some new truth – for a general principle is proved by the absence of contrary instances"[31]. But one must beware of this pseudo-indignation of Śaṃkara against Nāgārjuna[32]. For the apparent world, which he thus caused Nāgārjuna to deny, was no less fictitious from Śaṃkara's own point of view, and all the means of knowledge, which according to Śaṃkara thus guaranteed its existence, were, as he himself declared in the Introduction to his major philosophical work, only working within

[30] *Ślokavārtika*, Nirālamvanavāda, verses 6–10.

[31] Śaṃkara on *Brahmasūtra*, II. II. 21.

[32] Cf. T. Stcherbatskoy, *The Conception of the Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, p. 38: "Śaṃkara accuses them (Mādhyamikas) of disregarding all logic and refuses to enter into a controversy with them. The position of Śaṃkara is interesting, because, at heart, he is in full agreement with the Mādhyamikas, at least in the main lines, since both maintain the reality of the One-without-a-second, and the mirage of the manifold. But Śaṃkara, as an ardent hater of Buddhism, could never confess that. He, therefore, treats the Mādhyamika with great contempt . . . on the charge that the Mādhyamika denies the possibility of cognizing the absolute by logical methods *(pramāṇas)* . . . This opinion, as is well-known, Śaṃkara himself shares. He does not accept the authority of logic as a means of cognizing the absolute, but he deems it a privilege of the Vedāntin to fare without logic, since he has revelation to fall back upon. From all his opponents he requires strict logical methods".

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the general framework of ignorance or *avidyā*. It is interesting to quote the passage here. "The mutual superimposition of the Self and the not-Self, which is termed Nescience (*avidyā*), is the presupposition on which they base all the practical distinctions – those made in ordinary life as well as those laid down in the Veda – between means of knowledge, objects of knowledge (and knowing persons) and all scriptural texts, whether they be concerned with injunctions and prohibitions or with final release. But how can the means of right knowledge such as perception, inference, etc. and scriptural texts have for their object that which is dependent on Nescience? – Because, we reply, the means of right knowledge cannot operate unless there be a knowing personality, and because the existence of the latter depends on the erroneous notion that the body, the senses, and so on, are identical with, or belong to, the Self of the knowing person. For without the employment of the senses, perception and other means of right knowledge cannot operate. And without a basis (i. e. the body) the senses cannot act. Nor does anybody act by means of a body on which the nature of the Self is not superimposed. Nor can, in the absence of all that, the Self which, in its own nature is free from all contact, become a knowing agent. And if there is no knowing agent, the means of right knowledge cannot operate (as said above). Hence perception and the other means of right knowledge, and the Vedic texts have for their object that which is dependent on Nescience"[33].

To the students of Śaṃkara's philosophy as a whole, the declaration that even the Vedas or the scriptural texts moved within the framework of Nescience or Ignorance may appear to be too bold and somewhat incongruous. For, as we have already seen, it was ultimately on the evidence of these scriptures that his claim to final truth was dependent. At the same time there is no doubt that the doctrine of the intrinsic falsity of the cognitive organs was as much a necessity for his idealistic outlook as it was for that of Nāgārjuna. Among the followers of Śaṃkara, therefore, Śrīharṣa and his commentator Citsukha took up the doctrine in right earnest and wanted to develop an advanced dialectical defence for it. Śrīharṣa did not even hesitate to acknowledge the indebtedness of the Advaita Vedānta to Nāgārjuna's annihilation of the cognitive organs[34].

But let us return to the first foreshadowing of the idealistic outlook as we find it in the Upaniṣads. One result of the rejection of all branches of knowledge – and therefore, by implication, of the cognitive organs as such – was that the doctrine recoiled back on itself and amounted to the rejection of the possibility of knowing *brahman* or the ultimate reality, i. e. of the very knowledge in defence of which normal human knowledge was thus summarily condemned. To know anything is to know it as "this" or "that". But the Self alone being real, it cannot be understood in terms of anything else; rather any attempt to know it as "this" or "that" is sinking into the depth of ignorance and darkness. Hence was the famous declaration of Yājñavalkya that the only possible approach to it could only be a purely

[33] Śaṃkara's Introduction to the commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*. Tr. Thibaut.
[34] T. Stcherbatskoy, *Buddhist Logic*, Vol. I, p. 52.

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negative one. "That Self is not this, it is not that (*neti, neti*). It is unseizable, for it is not seized. It is indestructible, for it is not destroyed. It is unattached, for it does not attach itself. It is unbounded. It does not tremble. It is not injured"[35]. But then could such a purely negative approach really lead to any positive knowledge of the Self or the *brahman*? Yājñavalkya's answer was a negative one, the reason being that knowledge presupposed a duality while the Self, as pure knower, meant the negation of all duality: "For where there is duality, as it were, there one sees another; there one smells another; there one hears another; there one speaks to another; there one thinks of another; there one understands another. Where, verily, everything has become just one's own self, then whereby and whom would one smell? Then whereby and whom would one see? Then whereby and whom would one hear? Then whereby and to whom would one speak? Then whereby and on whom would one think? Then whereby and whom would one understand? Whereby would one understand him by whom one understands this all? Lo, whereby would one understand the understander?"[36].

Interestingly enough, from the same idealistic standpoint it was declared that though the Self or brahman was thus by definition beyond the range of possible knowledge or understanding, every creature had a frequent access to it, though without being conscious of this. "So, just as those who do not know the spot might go over a hid treasure of gold again and again, but do not find it, even so all creatures here go day by day to that *brahma*-world (*brahma-loka*), but do not find it; for truly they are carried astray by what is false"[37]. The metaphor of the buried treasure is of course understood. But what could possibly be meant by saying that all creatures had in fact a frequent access to the inscrutable ultimate reality, though without knowing it? Śaṃkara, in his commentary on the Upaniṣad, answered this question with one word: *suṣuptikāla*, i. e. in the state of the deep dreamless sleep, which we, ordinarily at any rate, are accustomed to understand as a state of somewhat complete inhibition of consciousness. Such an answer may appear to be somewhat peculiar to the normal way of looking at things, yet it was quite in keeping with Yājñavalkya's standpoint. This leads us to see how the idealist philosopher, rejecting the validity of all branches of knowledge and the organs of knowledge, was driven to seek refuge in dreams, the state of dreamless sleep, and finally in death.

With his profound contempt for the normal waking experience, Yājñavalkya turned to sleep – "upon becoming asleep, he transcends this world and the forms of death"[38]. But how exactly was this possible? "When one goes to sleep", answered the idealist, "he takes along the material of this all-containing world, himself tears it apart, himself builds it up, and dreams by his own brightness, by his own light. Then this person becomes self-illuminated. There are no chariots there, no spans, no roads. But he projects from himself chariots, spans, roads. There are no blisses there, no pleasures, no delights. But he projects from himself

[35] *Br. Up.* III. 9. 6; IV. 2. 24.
[36] Ibid. II. 4. 14.
[37] *Ch. Up.* VIII. 3. 2.
[38] *Bṛ. Up.* IV. 3. 7.

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blisses, pleasures, delights. There are no tanks there, no lotus-pools, no streams. But he projects from himself tanks, lotus-pools, streams. For he is the creator"[39].

Two points were sought to be established here. First, in dream the self was somewhat free of the material bondage of the waking state and had a comparatively clearer realization of itself, because it is self-illuminated. Secondly, the objects experienced in dream had no extra-subjective existence, because these were created by the self itself, were projected by it. For the later idealists, however, it was only the question of taking one step further and turning the second of these suggestions into a secure foundation for their epistemological idealism. If dreams were evidence of the capacity of the self to create or project the objects dreamt of, then it had to be admitted that the self could manufacture the objects of experience and therefore there was nothing to prevent the supposition that the self was doing the same thing even during the state of being awake. The later idealists did in fact elaborate this line of argument, strengthening it by way of adding the evidence of the sense-illusions, which too were alleged to be but experience of the subjective creations as objective things. The opponents of idealism in Indian philosophy, therefore, felt obliged to argue that the dream-objects, like the objects of the sense-illusions, far from being mere subjective projections had real extra-mental existence, though in a different space-time context. Of course, for the later idealists, the dreams were illusory and false, and not a comparative approximation to truth as was probably hinted by Yājñavalkya. But it will be unwise to attach too much significance to this difference. For even the later idealists would have been forced logically to admit that the dreams, by enabling us to realize how the objects of experience were but products of the experiencer himself, helped us to move forward to the realization of the general falsity of waking experiences, and thus opened before us a new horizon of the higher philosophical realization for which otherwise there were only sense-illusions to count upon.

The controversy between the idealists and their opponents as to the real nature of the dream-experiences had indeed been a long one. We do not have the scope here to review it at length. Instead, we had better confine ourselves to the Upaniṣads. If dreams for the Upaniṣadic idealists meant a comparative freedom from the material bondage, the freedom was still greater in the state of deep, dreamless sleep. For, in spite of arguing that the objects of dreams were but creations or projections of the self, Yājñavalkya had to admit, perhaps grudgingly, that in dreams one was nevertheless bothered by the fears of the waking state. "Now, when people seem to be killing him, when they seem to be overpowering him, when an elephant seems to be tearing him to pieces, when he seems to be falling into a hole, – in these circumstances he is imagining through ignorance the very fear which he sees when awake"[40]. This partial limitation of the dreaming state, namely being sometimes bothered by the fears of the waking state, was removed as one sank into the state of the deep dreamless sleep. "As a falcon, or an eagle having flown around here in space, becomes weary, folds its wings and is borne down to its nest,

[40] Ibid. IV. 3. 20.

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just so this person hastens to that state where, asleep, he desires no desires and sees no dream". Such a state of blissful ignorance, consistently enough, was imagined to be a state of clearer realization of the self or brahman, because here the intelligent soul knew nothing within or without. "This, verily, is that form of his which is beyond desires, free from evil, without fear. As a man, when in the embrace of a beloved wife, knows nothing within or without, so this person, when in the embrace of the Intelligent Soul, knows nothing within or without. Verily, that is his (true) form in which his desire is satisfied, in which the Soul is his desire, in which he is without desire and without sorrow. There a father becomes not a father; a mother not a mother; the worlds not the worlds; the gods not the gods; the Vedas not the Vedas; a thief not a thief. There the destroyer of an embryo becomes not the destroyer of an embryo; a Caṇḍāla is not a Caṇḍāla; a Paulkasa is not a Paulkasa; a mendicant is not a mendicant; an ascetic is not an ascetic. There he is not followed by good, he is not followed by evil, for then he has passed beyond all sorrows of the heart"[41]. Again, "Verily, where there seems to be another, there the one might see the other; the one might smell the other; the one might taste the other; the one might speak to the other; the one might hear the other; the one might think of the other; the one might touch the other; the one might know the other. An ocean, a seer alone without duality, becomes he whose world is brahman . . . This is the man's highest path. This is his highest achievement. This is his highest world. This is his highest bliss. On a part of just this bliss other creatures have their living"[42].

However, the trouble was that even after such a perfect bliss of the deep dreamless sleep one had to return back to the state of waking. The realization of the perfectly nondual self in *suṣupti* was thus after all unfortunately temporary. How then could a permanent realization be achieved? Judging from the discussion that immediately followed in the Upaniṣad, we have the inevitable impression that Yājñavalkya had really only one answer to offer. It was "Death" – not the death of course, of one with desire or attachment, because such a one was destined to be reborn, but of one who was without desire: being brahman the released soul goes to the brahman. Here is Yājñavalkya's rather enviable description of how a dying man casts off all false sense of duality:

"'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not see'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not smell'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not taste'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not speak'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not hear'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not think'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not touch'.
'He is becoming one', they say, 'he does not know'.
The point of his heart becomes lighted up. By that light the self departs, either by the eye, or by the head, or by the other bodily parts. After him, as

[41] Ibid. IV. 3. 21–22. [42] Ibid. IV. 3. 32–33.

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he goes out, the life goes out. After the life, as it goes out, all the breaths go out. He becomes one with Intelligence. What has Intelligence departs with him. His knowledge and his works and his former Intelligence lay hold of him. Now, as a caterpiller, when it has come to the end of a blade of grass, in taking the next step draws himself together towards it, just so this soul in taking the next step strikes down this body, dispels its ignorance, and draws itself together (for making the transition) . . .''[43].

Thus in the idealistic philosophy Death without Desire was made the standpoint of the final philosophical wisdom. Other thinkers of the age, subscribing to the same idealistic outlook, perhaps hesitated to take such an extreme step. Instead of death, therefore, they spoke of a hypothetical state of mystic trance – presumably that of the so-called Yoga – and called it the *turīya* or the fourth state: such a state was supposed to yield the highest realization of the true self. Though clearly traceable to some primitive practices, the conception of Yoga had much havoc to play in the field of Indian philosophy. Supposed to be conducive to a condition of the total withdrawal of consciousness into itself, it proved to be a particularly fertile field for the free growth of idealistic speculations. It is no wonder therefore that one school of later idealistic philosophy, namely the Yogācāra school of the Mahāyāna Buddhists, preferred to derive its name from the Yoga practices. Among the opponents of idealism in Indian philosophy, there were at least some to realize the danger of admitting the validity of the Yoga-experience for philosophical issues. Kumārila[44], for example, boldly declared that the supposed Yoga-experience was at best a subjective fancy and therefore as good or as bad as any other fancy. Along with the modern scientist, the modern materiatist would perhaps prefer to look at such a state of the total withdrawal of consciousness from the world as merely some kind of catalepsy, maybe deliberately induced. In any case, granting the possibility of inducing a state like that, as a condition of achieving positive knowledge the suggestion of the *turīya* or *yoga*-trance was not much of an improvement upon Yājñavalkya's suggestion of death-without-desire. The end of knowledge, according to the idealistic standpoint, meant the beginning of philosophical wisdom. In other words, the claim to wisdom passes into its opposite.

According to the legend of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, king Janaka, a person of fabulous wealth, was so much thrilled by the exposition of this idealistic outlook that he was pleased to make successive gifts of a thousand cows to the philosopher Yājñavalkya for expounding it, and Yājñavalkya, in his turn, did not show any great idealistic indignation to such material gifts. In this way, after a free flight in the realm of pure consciousness, the legend somehow or other brought us back to earth. When we are thus brought back to earth, we may be allowed to raise the question what really was the source of such a philosophical outlook which, from its very inception, stood to condemn life and reject science? We may expect the clues in the Upaniṣads themselves.

[43] Ibid. IV. 4. 2–6. [44] *Ślokavārtika*, Nirālamvanavāda, verses 93 sqq.

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The traditional claim is that the Upaniṣads are parts of the Vedas. It is nevertheless necessary to note that in the Vedic tradition itself, the idealistic outlook of the Upaniṣads meant in fact a decisive break with the ancient ancestral convictions. This was virtually admitted by such passages of the Upaniṣads where for example Nārada sought for the knowledge of the Self in spite of possessing the knowledge of the Vedas, and the first thing he was told by Sanatkumāra was that among other branches of knowledge, the *Ṛgveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, and the *Atharvaveda* as the fourth, were but "mere names". Evidently it was felt that something new, something other than what was contained in the early Vedic compilations was needed. Evidently again, the need was felt because of a new situation.

What then was it that accounts for such a new turn of thought in the Vedic tradition? Pending further researches into the socio-economic history of the period, only the broad outlines of the answer can perhaps be suggested. The philosophical view which thus arose to condemn and reject life was the result of the philosophical pursuit turning away from life itself. As with the development of slavery in ancient Greece, so also in Upaniṣadic India the lofty contempt for the material world with its ever-shifting phenomena was the result of philosophical enquiry taking a free flight into the realm of pure reason or pure knowledge, i. e. knowledge divorced from action. This in turn could be possible only when a section of the community living on the surplus produced by another, could withdraw itself from the responsibility of the labour of production, and therefore also from the obligation of acknowledging the reality of the material world; for the process of labour alone carries the sense of objective coercion of consciousness[45]. Theory, in other words, was divorced from practice and became pure theory and the things thought of became mere ideas; the knower, the subject, sought to emancipate itself from the inhibitions of the object and to look at the latter as but the product of ignorance or *avidyā*.

What was decisive about Upaniṣadic India was a fully established caste-divided society with the Kṣatriyas (kings and nobles) as the ruling class and the Brahmins (priests) living under their direct patronage. "Verily", said the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, "in the beginning this world was *brahman*, one only. Being one, he was not developed. He created still further a superior form, the Kṣatrahood, even those who are the Kṣatriyas among the gods: Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu, Īśāna. Therefore, there is nothing higher than Kṣatra. Therefore, at the Rājasūya ceremony the Brahmin sits below the Kṣatriya. Upon Kṣatrahood, alone, does he confer that honour. This same thing, namely Brahminhood is the source of Kṣatrahood. Therefore, even if the king attains supremacy, he rests finally upon Brahminhood as his own source. So, whoever injures him (i. e. a Brahmin) attacks his own source. He fares worse in proportion as he injures one who is better"[46]. This gives us some idea of how a compromise was pro-

[45] In my *Lokāyata* (New Delhi, 1959) pp. 667–678, I have tried to argue this point in detail.

[46] *Bṛ. Up.* I. 4. 11.

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claimed between the nobles and the priests who jointly formed the ruling class and were jointly described as the *dvijas*, the twice-born. By contrast the lowest class, the Caṇḍālas, was freely bracketed by the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* with dogs and swine[47].

Now, if Yājñavalkya, the philosopher of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, gave us some idea of what the new philosophical outlook of the age was, Yājñavalkya, the law-giver, gave us the clear hint that this philosophy was the prerogative of the *dvijas*, i. e. of the Kṣatriyas and the Brahmins. Thus for example, in the *Yājñavalkya-smṛti*[48] that passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* which declared that the Self was to be seen, harkened to, pondered over, etc., was quoted word for word; but at the end of the passage was characteristically added: *dvijātibhih*, i. e. only by the *dvijas*. Of course, the law-giver was much later than the philosopher; yet he was evidently rationalizing what had become an accomplished fact over a considerable past.

How then were the *dvijas* – the Kṣatriyas and the Brahmins – related to the labour of production? They were, to begin with, supposed to have nothing to do with agriculture. For, as Baudhāyana[49] declared, the Vedas and agriculture were destructive of each other. Manu[50] said, even when compelled to follow the profession of a Vaiṣya, a producing and comparatively lower caste, the Brahmin and the Kṣatriya must avoid agriculture, because it is slavish (*parādhīna*) and involves injury. Again, he enumerated seven approved ways of getting wealth, leaving his commentator Medhātithi to explain that of these 'acquiring through conquest' was the means *par excellence* for the Kṣatriyas, just as 'receiving gifts' was for the Brahmins[51]. Again, while enumerating another list of professions prescribed for the time of distress, Manu[52] said in so many words that the Brahmins and the Kṣatriyas were not to engage themselves in *vṛddhi*, which, in this context could only mean the activities of production. More examples are not necessary. The aloofness of the higher castes from the labour of production was clear. As for the contempt for manual labour, it may further be remembered that the names of some of the lowest castes arose from the professions they followed[53].

The genuinely earlier strata of the *Ṛgveda*[54], in contrast, knew neither caste-distinction nor contempt for manual labour. In this huge bulk of primitive or semi-primitive poetry passages ennobling the collective labour of the tribesmen appear indeed to be innumerable. Increasing productive activity had in fact been such a persistent theme of the *Ṛgveda* that even the gods were frequently described as participating with the human groups in raising cattle and increasing

[47] *Ch. Up.* V. 10, 8.
[48] *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, III. 191.
[49] *Baudhāyana-dharma-sūtra* I. 5. 101.
[50] Manu, X. 83–84.
[51] Medhātithi on Manu X. 115.
[52] Manu X. 116–117.
[53] P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, Poona, 1941, p. 100.
[54] I have, in my *Lokāyata*, elaborately argued this point.

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food and wealth. The arts and crafts far from being regarded with contempt as in the law-codes of the later caste-divided society, were considered so important by these early poets that in their mythological imagination Tvaṣṭṛ, the craftsman *par excellence*, was raised to the status of a veritable deity. "He is a skilful workman, producing various objects showing the skill of an artificer. He is in fact the most skilful of workmen versed in crafty conversation"[55].

The earlier strata of the Vedic literature, therefore, do not give us an idea of the conditions under which knowledge or wisdom could be conceived as divorced from, opposed to and standing above action. Significantly, for the early Vedic poets the word for wisdom was also the word for action. Thus for instance according to the *Nighaṇṭu*[56], one of the synonyms for *prajñā* or wisdom was *dhī*, which was itself a synonym for *karma* or action. Another synonym for *karma* was *kratu*, which also meant *prajñā* or wisdom. Similarly the word *śacī* was interchangeable with both *prajñā* and *karma*. The implications are clear: there was no wisdom that was not also an action. The only wisdom then known was the wisdom of practical activity. Interestingly, the word *māyā*, which, in the philosophy of Advaita Vedānta came to stand for the dark, inscrutable principle of cosmic illusion, being mentioned in the *Nighaṇṭu* as a synonym for the word *prajñā*, had in origin the significance of this wisdom-action complex.

All this is reminiscent of ancient Greece. "Prior to the fifth century not the contrast but the unity of thought and deed is uppermost. In the epic and lyric knowledge is practical; to know is to know how; wisdom is skill in action and therefore power to act. Heraclitus, the first of the philosophers to turn to this theme, answers as a matter of course that *logos* and *sophie* carry the double reference of true word (and thought) and right deed"[57]. With the growth of slavery and the consequent degradation of manual labour, wisdom tended to free itself from its old bond with action, and therefore also from the material world with which, through action, one maintained intercourse. "For Plato, wisdom meant a knowledge not of nature, but of super-nature constituted by ideas . . . As for art, – that power to control nature, the slow acquisition of which by man Democritus regarded as identical with his self-differentiation from the animals – it was relegated by Plato to a kind of limbo. It belonged to the sphere of opinion, the bastard knowledge of the slave, not the truth of the philosopher"[58]. "In his *Laws*, Plato organises society on the basis of slavery, and, having done so, puts a momentous question: 'We have now made excellent arrangements to free our citizens from the necessity of manual work; the business of the arts and crafts has been passed on to others; agriculture has been handed over to slaves on condition of their granting us a sufficient return to live in a fit and seemly fashion; how now shall we organize our lives?' A

[55] Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, Straßburg, 1897, p. 116.
[56] *Nighaṇṭu* II. 1 & III. 9.
[57] G. Vlastos quoted by B. Farrington in *Philosophy for the Future*, New York, 1949, p. 4.
[58] B. Farrington in *Philosophy for the Future*, p. 5.

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still more pertinent question would have been: 'How will our new way of life reorganize our thoughts?' For the new way of life did bring a new way of thinking, and one that proved inimical to science. It was henceforth difficult to hold to the view that true knowledge could be arrived at by interrogating nature, for all the implements and processes by which nature is made to obey man's will had become, if not yet in fact, in the political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, the province of the slave"[59].

In Upaniṣadic India too agriculture, arts and crafts being relegated to the lower castes, the leisured castes – i. e. the Kṣatriyas or rulers, and the Brahmins subsisting on their direct patronage – reorganized their thoughts broadly on the lines on which it was done by Plato, i. e. their thoughts, detached from action and therefore free from the world, proceeded to fabricate a world-denying philosophy.

This circumstance is somewhat obscured by the eagerness of modern scholars to prove the Kṣatriya origin of the Upaniṣadic idealism. Of course, the internal evidence of the Upaniṣads makes it impossible to doubt that the kings and nobles of the age often took the leading part in evolving this strikingly new philosophy. In a legend occurring both in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*[60] and the *Kauṣītaki*[61], a certain Gārgya undertook to explain the nature of *brahman* to king Ajātaśatru of Kāśī. He offered a series of theories – twelve in the first text and sixteen in the second – all of which were rejected by the king as unsatisfactory. So Gārgya said, "Let me come to you as a pupil". The king answered, "Verily, it is contrary to the course of things that a Brahmin should come to a Kṣatriya thinking: 'He will teach me *brahman*'. However, I shall cause you to know *brahman* clearly". And the king told him how by a progressive deadening of the normal consciousness – sinking into the state of dreaming and then further of dreamless sleep – the real nature of *brahman* as pure self could be realized. "As a spider might come out with his thread, as small sparks come forth from the fire, even so from this soul come forth all vital energies, all worlds, all gods, all beings". In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* the king called this soul 'the truth of truths' and in the *Kauṣītaki* he explained how it was related to the bodily self. "When one awakens, – as from a blazing fire sparks would disperse in all directions, even so from this self the vital breaths disperse to their respective stations; from the vital breath, the sense-powers; from the sense-powers, the worlds. This self-same breathing spirit, even the intelligential self, has entered this bodily self up to the hair and finger-nail-tips. Just as a razor might be hidden in a razor-case, or fire in a fire-receptacle, even thus this intelligential self has entered this bodily self, up to the hair and finger-nail-tips. Upon that self these selves depend, as upon a chief his own men. Just as a chief enjoys his own men, or as his own men are of service to the chief, even thus this intelligential self enjoys these selves, even thus these selves are of service to that self"[62].

[59] B. Farrington, *Greek Science*, London, 1949, vol. I, pp. 105–106.
[60] *Br. Up.* II. 1.
[61] *Kauṣ. Up.* IV.
[62] Ibid. IV. 4.

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Significantly the metaphor was drawn from the ruling-class privilege of the age and it easily reminds us of the situation that developed in ancient Greece with the advance of the slave system. "This master-and-slave relation became fundamental for Plato's thought in every sphere"[63]. Aristotle "justified the subordination of slave to freeman by appealing to the subordination of woman to man and of body to soul; but the subordination of woman was a phenomenon of the same nature as slavery, and the subordination of body to soul, or of matter to form, was a projection on the plane of ideas of the cleavage that confronted him in society"[64].

It may be interesting to note in this connection that for the Upaniṣadic king this metaphor was not a mere matter of philosophy. For he claimed at the same time that this new philosophy of the self contained the clue to the political power of his class. "Verily", said he, "as long as Indra understood not this self, so long the Asuras (demons) overcame him. When he understood, then, striking down and conquering the Asuras, he compassed the supremacy, independent sovereignty and overlordship of all gods and of all beings"[65]. Incidentally, as we have already seen, in the mythological imagination of the Upaniṣadic thinkers Indra was the Kṣatriya among the gods. The same claim was more bluntly repeated in a legend of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*[66], which occurs, with some variations, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*[67] and the *Kāuṣītaki*[68] as well. A certain Brahmin called Gautama went to the king of the Pañcālas begging philosophical wisdom. In the *Chāndogya* the king told him: "This knowledge has never yet come to Brahmins before you; *and therefore in all the worlds the rule belonged to the Kṣatriyas only*". Evidently enough an important historical truth was contained in such a claim, for the royal power and the new philosophical outlook were not entirely unconnected. Evidently again as reflected in the ruling-class consciousness, the relation between the two appeared inverted: the royal power gave the thinkers their leisured-class existence, which in its turn led them to fabricate their leisured-class philosophy.

But let us return to the theory of the royal origin of the Upaniṣadic philosophy. Keith[69] raises a vigorous objection to the theory. The true solution of the problem, he argues, "is suggested by the obvious difficulties of the position of the maintainers of the theory: we must adopt a solution which explains why the whole Upaniṣadic tradition is Brahmanical and yet why the texts record actions of importance as regards the doctrine by the princes of earth. It is absurd to imagine that these references would have been left to stand had the Brahmins found it derogatory to their dignity". But that is exactly the point. The fact that the legends attributing the philosophy to the princes and kings were left thus to stand

[63] Farrington, *Greek Science*, I. 142.
[64] G. Thomson, *Aeschylus and Athens*, London, 1946, p. 368.
[65] *Kauṣ. Up.* IV. 20.
[66] *Ch. Up.* V. 3.
[67] *Bṛ. Up.* VI. 2.
[68] *Kauṣ. Up.* I.
[69] A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upaniṣads*, Harvard Oriental Series vols. 18, 19, Cambridge, 1914, p. 495.

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proves that the Brahmins did not find it derogatory to their dignity. Subsisting as they did on the royal donors, the Brahmins could not indeed find it so. Being neither direct producers like the low castes, nor direct plunderers like the royal castes, they lived on that portion of the surplus which came to them in the form of gifts from the kings. We have already seen how the law-codes declared that receiving gifts was the source of income *par excellence* for the Brahmins. In any case, the idealistic philosophy suited the temperament of both the castes, because both were equally aloof from the labour of production, i. e. *vṛddhi*, as Manu put it. We thus find the same philosophy being preached in the Upaniṣads by the king Ajātaśatru and by the priest Yājñavalkya, and the more king Janaka was thrilled by Yājñavalkya's free flight into the idealistic fantasies, the higher went the amount of the material wealth given to him.

We have also here the main clue as to how in later times the orthodox Buddhists, like the so-called Mahāyānists and the orthodox Brahmins, like the Advaita Vedāntists, notwithstanding all their mutual religious animosities, took up the same idealistic outlook and developed it in the same direction. For all these philosophers were equally aloof from the labour of production and lived the life of pure contemplation in the monastaries maintained by the gifts of kings and nobles; and if the Advaita Vedāntists did not originally have such well-organized monasteries like those of the Buddhists, Śaṃkara, as a great political organizer, saw to the establishment of these in all the four corners of the country. But all these belong to a later chapter of Indian history, into the details of which we cannot unfortunately enter here.

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Impact of Islam on Hinduism

R. C. Majumdar

Medieval India (c. 1200–1800 A. D.) presents one unique feature in the history of the world. It is the co-existence of Islam with another powerful religion in a country conquered by the Muslims. Throughout Asia and Africa, wherever the Muslims entered as conquerors, Islam reigns supreme and practically all traces of pre-existing religions have vanished. India presents the only exception. Here Islam absorbed one-fourth of the vast population, but the remaining three-fourths have succeeded in keeping to their old religious faiths. We do not propose to discuss the causes of this unique phenomenon but confine ourselves to its consequences. In other words it would be our endeavour to trace the impact of Hinduism and Islam on each other. It is an important study, for the history of the world does not furnish any analogous instance.

For centuries before the advent of the Muslims many foreign peoples with alien faiths conquered parts of India and permanently settled therein. But they have all been absorbed within the fold of Hinduism. The Muslim invaders alone not only maintained their own, but made a deep inroad upon the culture and civilization of the Hindus by driving a substantial portion of them within its fold. For the first time in its history India lost the homogeneity of its culture and became permanently divided among two separate communities, each with a distinct culture of its own. These two communities lived together, side by side, for more than six hundred years – in some regions for a thousand years or more – and yet they have remained as separate entities to such an extent that even today the members of one community never find the least difficulty in recognizing a member of the other. During communal riots, people of the same district, town, and village – even those who were next door neighbours or residing in the same street – have always ranged themselves into two opposite camps with astonishing rapidity.

Even eminent Indians have often connived at or ignored this very important aspect of the question. They have often expressed the view "that the Hindus and Muslims have coalesced into an Indian people very much in the same way as the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes and Normans formed the English people of today"[1]. But they conveniently forget that within a century or two of the Norman conquest nobody in Britain could find out who belonged to any particular one of these groups, while the Muslims, who settled in India long before the Norman conquest,

[1] Lajpat Rai, *Young India*, London, 1917, pp. 73–75.

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can easily be distinguished from the Hindus even today. Others put the same view in a slightly different way. While admitting the sharp antagonism between the Hindus and Muslims when the latter first settled in India, they hold that the close contact between the Hindus and Muslims during the long period of six or seven centuries resulted in such a transformation of both that each lost its individual character and a new culture was formed by the fusion of the two, which was "neither exclusively Hindu nor purely Muslim"[2]. The Indian Muslims never subscribed to this hopelessly untenable view, opposed to all historical facts, and very few Hindus really believe it today, though it survives in slogans born of political expediency.

The view itself is of recent origin and cannot be traced even a century ago. Nearly up to the close of the nineteenth century the Hindus and Muslims regarded themselves as two distinct cultural and political entities, each with separate traditions and interests. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817–98), the undisputed leader of the overwhelming majority of Musalmans in India, held the view till the end of his life that the Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations – differing in religion, ways of living, customs, culture and historical traditions. It is interesting to note that Alberuni, the great Muslim scholar who visited India early in the eleventh century A. D., expressed the same view. "The Hindus", he observed, "entirely differ from us in every respect. They totally differ from us in religion, as we believe in nothing in which they believe, and vice-versa"[3]. He also pointed out, in detail, the social exclusiveness between the two such as held good up to the end of the 19th century, and to a very large extent even today. It shows what little change was wrought between the two communities even after they had lived as neighbours – sometimes even nextdoor neighbours – for more than seven hundred years.

Of course, it would be nothing short of a miracle if two communities could live side by side for seven centuries without being affected in the least by mutual contact. As a matter of fact we find the common people of both communities sharing each other's primitive beliefs and superstitions, reverence for saints and popular festivals, folksongs, popular pastimes, and some minor social customs and etiquette, including dress, which did not encroach upon the religious faith of either. Individuals of both the communities learnt each other's language and literature and even composed books. There was a slight degree of reciprocal influence in civil architecture. The evolution of the Urdu language and the introduction of some new musical tunes exhibit such influence at its highest. Most of these were, however, very trivial, and concerned the externals without affecting in any way the essential elements of culture. Where such elements were affected, as, for example, the liberal religious thoughts and beliefs propagated by the Sufis and religious leaders like Kabir and Nanak, the number of persons who adopted them formed a microscopic minority, less than two per cent, who never made any impact on the

[2] Tara Chand. *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1954, p. 137.
[3] E. C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, London, 1888, pp. 17, 19.

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people at large, and this religious liberalism slowly ebbed away without leaving any deep impress on either community.

The steel frame of religion and society which sustained the fundamental structure of medieval culture and civilization, remained unchanged both among the Hindus and the Muslims. The worship of images which formed the most cherished element in the religious beliefs of the Hindus was an anathema in the eyes of the Muslims, and the long tradition of ruthless desecration of temples by them for nearly a thousand years formed a wide gulf between the two. The method of congregational prayer among the Muslims was a thing unknown to the Hindus, and the ceremonial worship of the Hindus to the accompaniment of music, both vocal and instrumental, was not only alien to the Muslims but positively distasteful and irksome to them.

The temples and mosques were built in purely Hindu and Muslim styles and were not influenced by each other to the least degree. As regards social institutions, the caste-ridden Hindu society was an enigma to the Muslims; while the food of the latter, particularly beef and onions, was looked upon with aversion by the Hindus. Other customs like *Sati* and untouchability among the Hindus, and widow-remarriage and marriage between first cousins among the Muslims, as well as those of lesser importance like their funeral ceremonies, dress etc. created a permanent cleavage between the two. The literary and intellectual tradition of the two communities ran on entirely different lines, and they were educated in different institutions, *Tols* and *Madrassas*. The Muslim drew their inspiration from the Quran and from Arabic and Persian literature. A number of Hindus knew Persian and a few learnt Arabic, but the Hindu mind was nurtured from boyhood on Sanskrit, particularly religious literature like the Epics and the Puranas. It is a strange phenomenon that although the Muslims and Hindus had lived together in Bengal for nearly six hundred years, the average people of each community knew so little of the other's traditions.

The strangest phenomenon is that neither community felt any disposition to profit by the good points of the other, even where they offered a glaring and refreshing contrast to the evils of its own. The caste-ridden Hindu community was not influenced in the least by the social equality which characterized Muslim culture. The religious bigotry of the Muslims did not suffer the least change by the example of the spirit of religious toleration which characterized Hindu culture. The social intolerance of the Hindus which made them refuse even a glass of water offered by a Muslim, not to speak of intermarriage and inter-dining, was matched by the religious bigotry of the Muslims who destroyed the temples of the Hindus and broke their images of gods without the least compunction for violating the most sacred sentiments of a close neighbour.

The Hindus lacked an historical sense. Although they excelled in almost every branch of literature in which the human mind has ever taken any interest or which has appealed to human intellect, they produced only one work, pertaining to a small isolated region in India, which has any claim to rank as history. On the other hand, the Muslims who came to India carried on their traditions of writing history

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and produced a large number of historical texts which must rank very high by the standard of the age. Yet the Hindus, who continued their literary pursuits throughout the Muslim rule, never realized the value of history nor imbibed the taste for or the technique of writing it.

The duration of Muslim rule in India was three to five times more than that of the British rule. Yet the Hindus imbibed western culture to an extent compared with which that of the influence which Muslim culture exerted upon them looks almost insignificant. Hindu society of the 18th century A. D. does not show any appreciable change in essential features of culture as compared to that of the 12th century. Yet only one century and a half of contact with the West changed the Hindus almost beyond recognition in intellectual, moral and social spheres.

How are we to explain this difference? We have no reason to believe that the Muslim rulers in India represented a strata of Islamic culture which was inferior in any way to the strata of Western culture represented by the British. The Hindus in the 12th and succeeding centuries must be regarded as more vigorous, morally and intellectually, than they possibly could be in the 18th century after six centuries of subjection to foreign rule and complete domination by an alien culture. If, therefore, the impact of Islam on Hinduism was much less than that of Western culture, it can only be due to two reasons. First, the potentiality of Islamic culture was considerably less than that of Western culture; and secondly, the Hindus entertained a much greater degree of hostility or repugnance to Muslim than to British rule.

The first of these two reasons I am not competent to discuss. But there is no doubt that the second operated to a very large extent. The cause of this repugnance was the religious intolerance of the Muslim rulers most of whom regarded it as a pious duty to trample upon the most cherished religious sentiments of the Hindus by demolishing their temples, building mosques in their place, breaking their divine images and using them as steps to the mosques for the Muslims to tread upon, and forcibly converting quite a large number of Hindus. The Muslim chronicles are full of blood-curdling stories of the massacre of the Hindus on a massive scale and of enslaving Hindu men and women *en masse*. In an age when religion counted far more to a Hindu than politics or any other thing, this religious bigotry of the Muslims appeared in a much more heinous light than their political subjection, and the loss of religious liberty lacerated their hearts more deeply than even the loss of political freedom.

That such was indeed the case may be proved by unimpeachable evidence. When British rule was established in Bengal, it contained a far larger number of Muslims than any other region in India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born when the British authority was just being established in Bengal. He was the greatest personality in Bengal at the beginning of the 19th century and one whom we may regard as the best representative of the most advanced political thinking of the time. He was a great scholar in Arabic and Persian and adopted Muslim dress, food etc. So nobody can accuse him of anti-Muslim bias. In a public document he narrates how the Muslims 'constantly trampled upon the civil and religious rights of the Hindus and

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habitually oppressed them'[4]. He also offers up thanks to God for having 'unexpectedly delivered this country from the long-continued tyranny of its former Rulers, and placed it under the government of the English – a nation who not only are blessed with the enjoyment of civil and political liberty, but also interest themselves in promoting liberty and social happiness, as well as free inquiry into literary and religious subjects, among those nations to which their influence extends'[5].

Some other distinguished personalities of the early nineteenth century also expressed similar views. How far these views were right or reasonable need not be discussed in the present context. What concerns us here is the mental attitude of the Hindus towards the Muslims. Since, even after close contact of six hundred years or more, the Hindus entertained a feeling towards the Muslims such as has been described above, we can easily understand how little disposed the Hindus would be to accept *voluntarily* any trait of Muslim culture. The exigencies of subjection to Muslim rule might force the Hindus to learn Arabic and Persian and adopt court-dress and etiquette, but very little of Islamic culture that was not demanded by absolute necessity for livelihood or personal safety, would appeal to them. A man does not seek to learn anything from those who are repulsive to him.

Throughout the nineteenth century, when Hindus and Muslims were common subjects of a foreign power, they seemed to live, *culturally*, in two separate worlds as it were. Bengal produced a galaxy of literary men down to the days of Rabindra Nath Tagore well-known for his humanism. But none of them, in their patriotic outbursts in poems, songs and novels, were inspired by the glory or greatness of Islam. This was mainly due to the fact that historical traditions which serve as inspiration to every community and specially its literary men, really drove a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims. The story of every Muslim victory in India was a glory for the Muslims but a painful memory of humiliation to the Hindu mind, and vice-versa. Muhammad bin Quasim, Sultan Mahmud, Muhammad Ghori, Alauddin Khalji and Aurangzeb – to mention only a few – were worshipped as heroes by the Muslims and despised as brutal conquerors by the Hindus. On the other hand, Shivaji, Rana Pratap and Ranjit Singh, who filled the hearts of the Hindus with visions of greatness and glory, were denounced as enemies by the Muslims. Equally significant, though less explicable, is the fact that the Muslim authors of Urdu poems, almost down to the end of the 19th century, drew their inspiration solely from Arabia and Persia. Even the geographical settings and environments – names of places, rivers, plants, flowers, etc. – were Arabic and Persian, and not Indian. These poets were in India but not of India.

The Muslims of all classes, poets as well as politicians, regarded themselves as members of the Islamic fraternity first, and citizens of India afterwards. Even as

[4] *Appeal to the King in Council*, *Works of Raja Rammohan Roy* (Panini Office Edition), pp. 445–446.

[5] *Final Appeal to the Christian Public*, ibid., p. 874.

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citizens they regarded themselves as members of a separate nation, distinct from the Hindu. These ideas were proclaimed with gradually increasing insistence by Sir Syed Ahmad and his followers during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. They gradually filtered down to the masses and dominated Indian politics in the twentieth century. Finally they led to the creation of Pakistan.

The popular view that M. A. Jinnah started the two-nation theory, or that the British rulers, following the time-honoured policy of 'Divide and Rule', created a split between the Hindus and Muslims, is not historically tenable. The division was there and both Jinnah and the British merely furthered and exploited it to serve their own ends. The genesis of Pakistan goes back to the Medieval period of Indian history, when Islam could not totally absorb Hinduism as it did the local religion in the other countries conquered by its followers. The Hindus and Muslims even failed to coalesce into a political and social unit, though with distinct religions, of which we find an example, on a very small scale, in China, where Muslims are hardly distinguishable from the general people of the country. But in China, the Muslims did not enter as conquerors, and while they imbibed Chinese culture they did not make any deep impress upon it. The case of India is thus unique in every way.

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Hindu-Muslim Unity

HIREN MUKERJEE

I feel it my duty to write, not only because Ashraf was a dear friend of mine but also because he lived a life of dedication, often at the cost of personal privation, to the cause of his own people in India and of socialism for all the world.

When as a young man Ashraf was drawn powerfully to our struggle for freedom, he found himself in a militant company of Indian Muslims who played a large and distinctive part in that struggle. Indeed, the rôle of Muslims in India's national movement is a proud story. British historiography in relation to our recent history, and also unfortunately some Indian writing, has often distorted that rôle. The partition of India in 1947 into two separate States, one of them – Pakistan – calling itself 'Islamic', has added point to the essentially incorrect claim that on the Indian sub-continent Hindu and Muslim have always been at loggerheads, and being unable to combine against the British, preferred to part company altogether, break up a unity that geography and history had alike appeared to ordain, and constitute separate political camps from where to sulk and fume against each other.

It would require a whole book to pin down the fundamental falsity of such a diagnosis. Since Pakistan is a fact, the diagnosis might also evoke in many quarters an easy assent. There is no doubt that serious weaknesses in the Indian national movement had created an unhappy situation, and the only way out, even as the long-desired freedom came, was found to be division of the country. This is, of course, a fact but *not*, I submit, the truth of the matter. In India's struggle for freedom, and even more, her struggle for socialism, Hindu and Muslim have been engaged together, and though at times, for historical reasons, certain different strands made their appearance, there can be no doubt of there being a single stream of advance. Ebbs and flows and even changes of course do not affect its quality.

It is necessary to recall that the impact of Islam on India had been a unique event in history. In the 11th century and subsequently, a brave new element entered Indian life. With its militant affirmations Islam resisted the infinitely eclectic spirit of Hindu thought, and yet it came to be acclimatised in India as nowhere else in the history of the journeyings of Islam from Spain to the Pacific. With its simple evangel and its suspicion of the subtle sophistications of the Hindu mind, Islam made in India a powerful advance. Many a Hindu beyond the pale must have found emancipation even in involuntary conversion. In a little while the

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Muslim ruling class ceased to be foreign in any real sense; they lived and died in India and knew no other homeland. An Akbar or a Sher Shah or a Zain-ul Abedin have thus been heroes to Hindu and Muslim alike. Indo-Muslim music, architecture, sculpture and painting are cherished by Hindu and Muslim alike. The impact of Islam heightened the quality of Indian culture and did not violate its integrity. Indeed, during Muslim rule there took place a creative fusion in spheres as disparate as music and administration and mysticism and manners. In Asoka's caves, long centuries ago (3rd century B. C.), one finds engraved the words: *Samavāya eva sādhu* – Concord alone is meritorious. Occasional discord notwithstanding, concord was the key-note of Indo-Muslim culture, and a shining symbol of that concord continues to this day in Urdu, an Indian language born of the happy fusion of Persian with Hindi.

It might be recalled how a Muslim leader, Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, who was for some time Mayor of Calcutta, strongly advocated a partition of India into Muslim and Hindu zones, and claimed at the same time, in a speech in April, 1941, that Muslims belonged to India in life as well as in death. It was a picturesque way in which he put it. When a Hindu dies, he said, his body is burnt and the ashes are thrown into the river, to be carried by the current Heaven knows where, but when a Muslim dies, he needs six feet by three of the good Indian earth! And in India today the Muslim is part of the land no less than is the Hindu. India still has the third largest population of Muslims in the world, and the secular basis of the State is the guarantee that the Muslim belongs here as much as the non-Muslim in India.

Even so, to our lasting shame, the partition of India did take place in August, 1947, but it did so as the culmination of the policy of *Divide et Impera* which the wily British colonialists had played throughout their rule in India.

Sociological conditions being what they have been in India, where medievalism has persisted long after it was outmoded in Europe, religion as a contributory to the people's way of life has played a bigger rôle and tended in many ways to demarcate Muslims and Hindus. This is what imperialism pounced upon and exploited to the uttermost in its own interest. With practised guile the British Government in India sought to separate the two communities by first appearing to pamper and patronize the Hindu against the Muslim, and later, when the Hindu inevitably began to see through the game, it transferred its favours to the Muslim in order to win and keep his allegiance. Thus every reactionary interest in India, irrespective of community or religion, found the British Government its unfailing protector. In the fight for freedom, it must be confessed, Indian wits could not quite match British diabolism, and even as this sub-continent became free, its natural unity was subverted. As a parting present, an artificial animosity was injected into our body politic by an imperialism which was in decay but by no means dead.

I have made an humble attempt in *India's Struggle for Freedom*[1] to show that while Muslim participation in that struggle has from time to time a certain distinc-

[1] 3rd revised edition, Calcutta, 1962.

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tive quality (which might conceivably, though perversely, be interpreted as an argument for the Muslim being a separate entity in India), the essential and overwhelming fact is our people's constant readiness, irrespective of religion, to respond unitedly whenever the leadership sent out a call for real struggle – a struggle not merely for an abstract concept of freedom but for the very concrete aim of a better and happier social life. If, indeed, in India we had had a more powerful socialist trend before Independence, perhaps the division of the country and the inevitably concomitant mischiefs (which even today imperialist powers assiduously fan and exploit) could have been prevented.

History is a cruel goddess and from us in India has extracted the price of our own defaults, a price that we have not paid in full as yet. A scholar like Ashraf, who was at the same time deeply at one with his people and ached constantly to place his talents at their service, felt this poignantly throughout his life. His social origin was such that it had enabled him to know intimately the Muslim and the Hindu element in our Indian make-up. He had felt as a very young man the first, fine, careless rapture that Gandhi's phenomenal emergence onto the Indian scene (1919–22) had brought to Muslim and Hindu alike. His flair for historical studies had made him drink deep at the springs of Indian life, and he thrilled to his own personal discovery, in a past which largely lives on in the present, of all that linked Muslim and Hindu together in India in spite of their divergences. Acquaintance with Marxism enabled him truly at last to put two and two together and to understand the processes of history, in India as well as elsewhere. Pulled in different directions – as was inevitable in the India of his day – by love of scholarship and a yearning to serve the people, Ashraf led a restless life, and it was only lately that he seemed to have reached port after somewhat stormy seas. Much indeed was expected from him in the search for knowledge – knowledge that is part of the struggle to change society – but that was not to be. His passing away leaves a void that, in India's intellectual context, is truly grievous.

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The Problem of modern Hindi and Urdu in the Light of the Lexical Synonym

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Both from a practical and a theoretical point of view, the problem of Hindi and Urdu has attracted attention. There are various opinions on the matter. Even in India there are some who regard Hindi and Urdu as two distinct languages, and others who consider them to be two styles of the same language. Before we examine modern Hindi and Urdu, it is necessary to give a short summary of the history of the origin, development and interrelation of the two at various periods of the history of the language.

The history of Hindi, as of many other "Neo-Indian" languages, goes back to the beginning of the XI c. A. D. In the first period of its development (XI c. to XIV c.), the western dialects called "Dingal" and "Pingal" by Indian linguists, played the most important role. The poetry tradition developed in these dialects.

Important changes in the literary tradition of Hindi took place in the second period of its development (from the beginning of the XV c. to the middle of the XIX c.). It was then that the literature in Dingal and Pingal went out of existence, and in their place four new dialects of Hindi – Braj, Awadhi, Maithili and Khariboli made their appearance in poetry. The literature written in the first three of these dialects was closely associated with the whole cultural tradition and the themes that had hitherto developed in India. In particular, this literature was closely connected with the spread of Vishnuism in the country, a democratic movement concealed, as is frequently the case in the period of feudalism, under the guise of religion. One of the tendencies that appeared in this movement – Krishnaism – helped the emergence and development of a literary tradition in Braj. This is to be explained by the fact that, according to the legend, Krishna, one of the gods of the Hindu pantheon, lived in the district of Mathura, that is, in the area of the Braj dialect. In the east of the Hindi linguistic region, Krishnaite poetry developed on the basis of another local dialect, Maithili. The other form of Vishnuism, Ramaism, stimulated the development of a literary tradition in Awadhi, spoken in the region of Awadh where, according to legend, the mythical deified hero Rama had his kingdom. Gradually the literature in Braj gained an increasingly wider scope, spreading beyond the local boundaries of Braj and ousting Awadhi and Maithili as literary media. The literary tradition in these various dialects – Dingal, Pingal, Braj, Awadhi and Maithili – provided the foundations of Hindi literature.

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It was also in this second period that the Khariboli dialect of Hindi became more important. The original native speakers of Khariboli live round about the city of Delhi. Since this area was for many centuries the most important political and cultural centre in the country, the Khariboli dialect gradually acquired the position of the basic Hindi dialect in which the speakers of the various dialects communicated with one another. Moreover, Hindi (based on the same dialect, Khariboli) began to be used as the medium of communication among various peoples with different languages also settled in Northern and Central India.

About the same time, alongside the age-old Indian religions, Islam, brought to India from Muslim countries, began to make its appearance over a considerable part of the country. Arabic and Persian also came into India with Islam. Persian came into use in a number of regions as the state and official-administrative language. With these languages came their script, vastly different from all Indian systems of writing, in particular being written from right to left instead of from left to right. In this period a large section of educated people were acquainted with Persian and consequently with its written form. As a result, literature in Persian was cultivated at the courts of Muslim rulers. However, at these courts also a literature began to develop in the local Hindi language on the basis of Khariboli. This dialect was also called *zabān-e urdū* (the language of the camp or bazar). Gradually the first element of the term, *zabān-e*, was dropped and it was shortened down to "*urdū*". The same name was later transferred to the literature, giving rise to the term *urdū adab* (Urdu literature). As the founders of this new literature were familiar with the system of writing in use at court, they were the first to develop a written literature in Indian languages which was not based on traditional Indian scripts (i. e. not in the ancient Indian Devanagari script used in this region for the literature in other Hindi dialects, and which is now also known as the Hindi alphabet), but on Persian script, in which a few additional signs were introduced. Thus a position arose in which the various Hindi dialects began to be written in two completely different systems of writing, the literature in Braj and Awadhi in Devanagari characters (Hindi), and the literature in Khariboli (Urdu) in Urdu script.

Urdu literature differed from Braj and Awadhi literature not only from the point of view of the dialects and system of writing, but also as regards content, since it was not associated with the earlier Indian literary tradition but with Persian, that is with a literary tradition that had developed in countries where Islam prevailed. The themes that distinguished Urdu literature from all other Hindi literature led to yet another difference in the new verse metres borrowed from Persian literature, which had hitherto been unknown in Indian poetry. The same difference in theme and content led also to the use of images (figures of speech) in Urdu distinct from those that belong to traditional Indian usage. All this gave rise in Urdu to an influx of a great number of loan words taken from Persian literature of which extensive use may be seen in the works of many authors. Thus a fundamentally new literary tradition was founded in India, differentiated from the others as to (1) script, (2) thematic content, (3) metrical forms, and (4) vocabulary.

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Like the Khariboli dialect, Urdu literature spread to a number of regions in northern, western and central India, i. e. extending beyond the territory inhabited by Hindi speakers. It began to develop in Kashmir, the Punjab, Sindh, and even in the south on the territory of Hyderabad mainly inhabited by a Telugu-speaking population.

Thus, in the second period of its history, four dialects of Hindi made their appearance in literature, namely Awadhi, Maithili, Braj and Khariboli (Urdu). The literary traditions of the first three of these, closely linked as they were by the whole of the proceeding development of Indian literatures, eventually began to merge and came to be included in the general concept of "Hindi literature". The fourth literary tradition, however, on account of its specific peculiarities did not form part of Hindi literature, but developed independently as "Urdu literature". Hence the two different names for the language, "Hindi" and "Urdu", subsequently came into use.

The third period of the history of Hindi, starting from the middle of the XIX century, was marked by important political and economic changes for the peoples of India. Due to these changes the development of prose literature became an urgent need. In this new historical context these prose forms, whether in Hindi or Urdu, could only develop in a dialect which could be understood by all Hindi-speaking people. Hence Hindi prose literature began to develop not in the traditional dialects (Braj, Awadhi and Maithili) but in Khariboli, the language in which Urdu poetry had arisen in the earlier phase. Naturally, Urdu prose also began to appear in this dialect. All these circumstances are highly significant, since they meant that both Hindi prose and Urdu poetry and prose literature began to develop on the basis of a common dialect.

Gradually in the first decades of the XX century, Hindi poetry also went over from Braj to Khariboli. This completed the transition of the whole literary tradition of Hindi and Urdu to a common basic dialect.

In addition, the departure at this time of Hindi and Urdu literature from their traditional patterns, each with its distinct mythology, in favour of realism and the representation of contemporary life, brought about the gradual disappearance of another difference which had formerly distinguished the two literatures from one another, that is, in their subject matter. This change itself also tended to encourage a closer similarity as regards figures of speech and vocabulary. In fact in this period the process of merging Hindi and Urdu literature began, a process which still continues in India at the present time.

The factor that preserves the specific lexical peculiarities of Hindi and Urdu must not however be forgotten. This is the existence in Hindi and Urdu of two different sources for additions to the vocabulary. Urdu literature developed its vocabulary to a great extent by means of Arabic-Iranianisms, while Hindi literature largely makes use of another source to enrich and develop its language, that is to say it borrows from Sanskrit, which is not only done in developing Hindi literature, but also in the majority of other modern Indian literatures, including the literatures of Southern India in Dravidian languages. This use of Sanskrit vocabulary has led to the exten-

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sion of a common lexical basis in most of the modern literary languages of the country, and this in turn is essential for strengthening the unity of India as a whole.

There is a further question which must be considered with regard to Hindi and Urdu. It has sometimes been stated in books that Hindi is the language of the Hindus and Urdu the language of the Muslims. This view cannot be accepted as correct, for there were and still are Hindus in India who are connoisseurs of Urdu, and Muslims who are highly proficient in Hindi. Moreover, there are both Hindus and Muslims who are simultaneously masters of both languages. Nor is it altogether correct to think that only Urdu literature was cultivated at the courts of Muslim rulers while Hindi literature was patronized only by Hindu rulers. The fact that at the court of Akbar, one of the greatest rulers of India and a Muslim, the pursuit of Hindi alongside Urdu literature was also remarkably advanced,[1] is sufficient to refute that argument.

In the ten years preceding the partition of the country into two states in Northern India, Urdu was widely cultivated not only as a literary language but also in public administration. As a result of this, a large part of the male population, both Hindu and Muslim, when they had opportunities for education – for the sake of future employment – did not study Hindi but Urdu. Consequently the knowledge of Urdu tended to become a male acquisition among both Muslims and Hindus, while women generally remained illiterate. When, however, women did receive an education, it was usual among Hindus for them to study in order to read the traditional Hindi literature in Hindi script, while Muslim women were taught Urdu.

What is the position of Hindi and Urdu since the partition of the country in 1947, when it was divided into two states on the basis of religion? In India Hindi is increasingly being spread and (alongside English) has been declared the official state language of India. Moreover it is called the "National Language" of the country, since it is widely held in India that the whole population , irrespective of the existence of a large number of different languages, form a single Indian nation. Thus, when an inhabitant of India is asked what his nationality is, he does not as a rule reply that he is a Bengali or an Assamese but that he is an "Indian". In passing it should be noted that Hindi-speaking people are not known even today by any common name. In our literature these people are referred to as 'Hindustani'.[2] The term may be found in the works of some Indian scholars also. However, in practice the people do not to this day use it in speaking of themselves. The present writer came to the conclusion that this really is the case during his stay in India. Instead of calling himself a Hindustani, a man belonging to the people who live around Chhattisgarh will say "I am from Chhattisgarh", or some one in Bundelkhand, will say "I am from Bundelkhand", and so on. The use of the name "Hindustani" with reference to those who speak Hindi mostly occurs among other peoples of India; thus, for example, the Punjabis, in the West, or the Bengalis, in the East, may speak of them in this way.

[1] Saryūprasād Agravāl. *Akbarī darbār ke hindī kavi*, Lakhnaū, 1950.

[2] This is the most usual term for the inhabitants of the whole of India (Hindustan)

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Since Partition Urdu is spoken in India and West Pakistan. In India it occurs both in the area where it is the language of the people, in U. P., M. P. and Bihar, and outside this area, in particular on the territory of the former state of Hyderabad. Urdu continues to be used by all who spoke it before Partition. In addition, educational institutions and societies for the encouragement of the study of Urdu continue to function successfully. The most important of these bodies are *Anjuman Tarrakiye Urdu* (The Society for the Development of Urdu) at Aligarh and the Osmania University in Hyderabad. Urdu is included along with Hindi in the list of the main Indian languages in the addendum to the Constitution of the Republic of India. This is not done in order to stress the difference between Hindi and Urdu, but with the aim of stating the fact that Urdu exists and is used in India. It is done in order to respect the feelings of those who have received their education in Urdu.

In Pakistan Urdu appears as the state language. This came about because for many centuries written and spoken Urdu had become widely prevalent in the regions which now form West Pakistan. As a result of Urdu being spoken today not in one but in two states, it is possible that in the course of time two slightly different forms of the language may emerge – an Indian Urdu and a Pakistani Urdu. In that case Indian Urdu will presumably more and more come to resemble Hindi in vocabulary (i. e. Sanskritisms as well as Arabic–Iranianisms will be used). On the other hand, Pakistani Urdu keeps strictly to the Arabic-Iranian sources of new vocabulary. These tendencies can already be observed in the development of Urdu in India and Pakistan at the present time.

That in brief is the history of the development and relationship of Hindi and Urdu. In order to give a representative idea of the present day relationship between Hindi and Urdu, we give below a number of examples taken from books which have appeared simultaneously in Hindi and Urdu. The lexical divergences are shown in the texts in italics.

First, there is an example from children's literature published in two editions in India, one in Hindi[3] and the other in Urdu[4]. A literal translation is given to facilitate comparison with the original.

Hindi	Urdu
hari apne ghar lauṭā to šām ke chai baj rahe the.	*hari apne ghar lauṭā to šām ke chai baj rahe the.*
When Hari came home, it was six o'clock in the evening.	
usne dekhā ki sārā ghar sunsān hai.	*usne dekhā ki sārā ghar sunsān hai.*
He saw that the whole house was silent.	

[3] Kudsiyā Zaidī. *Gāndhī bābā*. Ilāhābād, 1952, p. 1.
[4] Kudsiyā Zaidī. *Gāndhī bābā kī kahānī*. Delhī, 1955.

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na dādā jī baiṭhe hukkā guṛ-	*na dādā jī baiṭhe hukkā guṛ*
guṛā rahe haiṅ aur na mātā	*guṛā rahe haiṅ aur na mātā*
jī rasoī meṅ roṭī banā	*jī rasoī meṅ roṭī bana*
rahī haiṅ.	*rahī haiṅ.*

Neither was grandfather sitting smoking his hookah nor mother baking bread in the kitchen.

itnā sannāṭā dekh kar hari	*itnā sannāṭā dekh kar hari*
ko ḍar sā lagne lagā.	*ko ḍar sā lagne lagā.*

Seeing this silence Hari got frightened.

usne mātā jī ko idhar-udhar	*usne mātā jī ko idhar-udhar*
ḍhūṅḍhā to dekhā ki vah ek	*ḍhūṅdhā to dekhā ki vah ek*
kone meṅ baiṭhī ro rahī haiṅ.	*kone meṅ baiṭhī ro rahī haiṅ.*

Having searched everywhere for his mother, he saw that she was sitting crying in a corner.

As is evident from the above excerpt (which could be further continued) this example of Hindi and Urdu texts presents no lexical differences at all and in this case the sole difference between Hindi and Urdu is reduced to the use of two different scripts. This is possible because the Hindi author does not use any words in the Hindi text characteristic of "high Hindi" style, and in the Urdu text none that belong to "high Urdu". The vocabulary of the old, original Hindi (*ghar* – 'house', *sunsān* – 'silent', *rasoī* – 'kitchen', *sannāṭā* – 'silence', *ḍar* – 'fear' etc.) is well represented in this passage, as well as words of Arabic-Iranian origin which are deeply embedded in the language (*šām* – 'evening', *hukkā* – 'pipe'). It follows that these books are written in a neutral style which is completely comprehensible both to those who are educated in Hindi and those who are educated in Urdu. On the other hand, in its written form the text may be completely inaccessible even to a literate Hindi-speaking person: no-one who has been taught Urdu only will be able to read the Hindi text, and the Urdu text cannot be read by someone who has only learnt Hindi.

It must not be supposed that all children's books are written in a similar neutral style. Works written on the one hand in the style of "ordinary Hindi", or on the other, in "ordinary Urdu" may also be found. This means that although the greater part of the Hindi and Urdu text is lexically identical at certain points, frequently in the writer's words and less often in the speech of the characters, lexical differences will appear. We may illustrate this by a passage from a story giving the words of the cat flattering the kite that is about to tear her to pieces.

Hindi	Urdu
gangā ke kināre maiṅ ne	*gangā ke kinare maiṅ ne*
bahut se jānvaroṅ se āpkī	*bahut se jānvaroṅ se āpkī*
prašansā *sunī thī ki āp bahut*	***tārīf*** *sunī thī ki āp bahut*

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sajjan pakšī *haiṅ aur har*	***nek parindā*** *haiṅ aur har*
samay *išvar kā bhajan*	***vakt*** *išvar kā bhajan*
karte rahte haiṅ.[5]	*karte rahte haiṅ.*[6]

On the banks of the Ganges I have heard many animals **praising** you, that you are a **noble bird** and offer prayers to god all the **time.**

In the Hindi and Urdu variants of the above quoted sentence a large number of the words are the same. Thus, not only in the Urdu, but in the Hindi too there are loans from Iranian (*kinārā* – 'bank', *jānvar* – 'animal', *har* – 'every'). On the other hand, Sanskrit loans can occur in Urdu as well as in Hindi: *išvar* – 'god', *bhajan* – 'prayer'. The use of these two Sanskritisms is here to be explained by their function as terms belonging to Hinduism. Hence the substitution of what would appear to be the proper corresponding synonyms of Arabic origin (*khudā* – 'god', and *ibādat* – 'prayer') would not be acceptable here, since these words do not apply to Hinduism but to Islam. Their use might influence the character of the tale, which would then be given a Muslim nuance. Further, the passages examined here also show certain lexical differences: *prašansā* – *tārīf* – 'praise'; *sajjan* – *nek* – 'noble'; *pakšī* – *parindā* – 'bird'; *samay* – *vakt* – 'time'. These words form pairs of stylistic synonyms: the first words in these pairs, taken from Sanskrit, tend in the direction of Hindi, and the second, the Arabic-Iranianisms, towards Urdu. Thus the problem of Hindi and Urdu as seen from this passage is a problem of lexical synonyms, the problem of using the synonyms that correspond to the style of Hindi or Urdu as the case may be.

Similar pairs of stylistic synonyms will be found in comparing the text of Premchand's story '*Shanti*', written in Hindi[7], with its Urdu-"translation."[8]

iske ek mahīne bād mujhe	*iske ek mahīne bād mujhe*
karobar ke silsile meṅ	*karobar ke silsile meṅ*
videš *jānā paṛā aur*	***gair mumālik*** *jānā paṛā aur*
vahāṅ mere ***anubhav*** *se*	*vahāṅ mere* ***andāze*** *se*
kahīṅ ***adhik*** *– do sāl lag*	*kahīṅ* ***zyādā*** *– do sāl lag*
gaye.	*gaye.*

A month after this I happened to go **abroad** on business and there **far** beyond my **intentions** two years passed.

gopā ke ***patr*** *barābar jāte*	*gopā ke* ***khutūt*** *barābar jāte*
ṛahte the jinse mālūm hotā	*rahte the jinse mālūm hotā*
thā ki vah ārām se haiṅ, koī	*thā ki vah ārām se haiṅ, koī*
cintā *kī bāt nahīṅ hai.*	***fikr*** *kī bāt nahīṅ hai.*

[5] Kṛṣṇa Gupta, *Jaisī karnī vaisī bharnī*, Delhī, p. 11.
[6] Kṛṣṇa Gupta, *Jaisī karnī vaisī bharnī*, Delhī, p. 7.
[7] Premcand. *Mānasarovar*. Bhāg 1. Banāras, 1958, pp. 99–100.
[8] Premcand. *Vāridāt*, Delhī, 1956, p. 57.

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Letters arrived regularly from Gopā from which it was learned that she was living comfortably and had no **worries.**

mujhe ***pīche*** *mālūm huā ki gopā*	*mujhe* ***bād meṅ*** *mālūm huā ki gopā*
ne mujhe bhī gair samjhā aur	*ne mujhe bhī gair samjhā aur*
vāstavik sthiti *chipātī rahī.*	***sahī hālat*** *chipātī rahī.*

Later I got to know that Gopā considered me a stranger too and hid the **real state** of affairs.

videš *se lauṭ kar maiṅ sīdhā*	***pardes*** *se lauṭ kar maiṅ sīdhā*
dillī pahuṅcā.	*dillī pahuṅcā.*

On returning from **abroad** I came straight to Delhi.

dvār *par pahuṅcte hī mujhe*	***darrāze*** *par pahuṅcte hī mujhe*
ronā ā gayā.	*ronā ā gayā.*

As soon as I got to the **door** I began to cry.

The analysis of this passage shows that the Hindi original really does not differ materially from its "translation" in Urdu. The common lexical basis is almost entirely from the old vocabulary of Hindi, as are the words of Arabic-Iranian origin which are used in the Hindi original. In "translating" from Hindi into Urdu, the Hindi loans from Sanskrit that occur are exchanged for their stylistic synonyms, mostly words of Arabic-Iranian origin:

anubhav	*andāzā*	'intention',
adhik	*zyādā*	'much',
patr	*khutūt*	'letters',
cintā	*fikr*	'worry, trouble',
vāstavik	*sahī*	'real',
sthiti	*hālat*	'state, condition'
dvār	*darvāzā*	'door'.

In one place the Sanskritism meaning "abroad" is changed for the Arabic-Iranian synonym *gair mumālik*; in another, for the synonym *pardes*, taken from old Hindi. In one case the author of the 'translation' has changed a word of basic Hindi, *pīche* ('afterwards'), for a more familiar Urdu (and Hindi also, by the way) synonym *bādmeṅ*. But this changing of words proper to Hindi for Arabic-Iranian synonyms is not typical; it might also be the result of an additional "Urdu-izing" of the text.

From this passage it would seem that pairs of synonyms may occur, consisting of loans from Sanskrit and words of Arabic-Iranian origin (*gyāt* – *mālūm* – 'known') in the Hindi text, and of a word of Arabic-Iranian origin and a word from original Hindi in the Urdu. It must be remarked that some of the synonyms – words of Arabic-Iranian origin – occurring in the Urdu 'translation' can also occur in ordin ary Hindi' style (*zyādā* – 'much', *darvāzā* – 'door', while others are not

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used in Hindi styles (*khutūt* – 'letters', *gair mumālik* – 'abroad'). Below we give a passage in which the reverse process has been carried out, namely a "translation" from Urdu into Hindi. For this purpose an excerpt from a story[9] by the contemporary Indian writer, *Krishan Chandar*, who writes in Urdu is shown together with its Hindi "translation"[10].

Urdu Original	*Hindi Translation*
pul guzar gayā. pagḍaṇḍī guzar gaī.	*pul guzar gayā. pagḍaṇḍī guzar gaī.*

They passed the bridge. They passed the path.

bādām ke ***darakhtoṅ*** *kī* ***katār*** ***khatam*** *ho gaī.*	*bādām ke* ***vrkšoṅ*** *kī* ***paṅkti*** ***samāpt*** *ho gaī.*

The **row** of almond **trees** came to an **end**

ab ham jhīl ke kināre-kināre cal rahe the.	*ab ham jhīl ke kināre-kināre cal rahe the.*

Now we were walking along the bank of the lake.

maiṅ ne ***āhistā*** *se* ***kištī*** *kholī.*	*maiṅ ne* ***dhīre*** *se* ***nāv*** *kholī.*

I **slowly** untied the **boat.**

vah ***kištī*** *meṅ baiṭh gaī*	*vah* ***nāv*** *meṅ baiṭh gaī*

She got into the **boat.**

maiṅ ne cappū apne hāth meṅ liyā aur ***kištī*** *ko khekar jhīl ke* ***markaz*** *meṅ le gayā.*	*maiṅ ne cappū apne hāth meṅ liyā aur* ***nāv*** *ko khekar jhīl ke* ***madhya*** *meṅ le gayā.*

I took the oar in my hand and rowed the **boat** and brought it into the **middle** of the lake.

A comparison of the Urdu text with its Hindi "translation" shows that here, too, both versions are very close to one another. In both the Urdu and the Hindi there are many common words from Hindi. These in the first place are the simple verbs and also a number of nouns like *pagḍaṇḍī* – 'path'; *jhīl* – 'lake'; *cappū* – 'oar'; *hāth* – 'hand'. Many words of Arabic-Iranian origin are also common to both the Urdu and the Hindi text; for example *pul* – 'bridge'; *bādām* – 'almond'; *kinārā* – 'bank'. The hybrid verb *guzarnā* with an Iranian root is also common to both. In addition a number of words of Arabic-Iranian origin which also belong to the vocabulary of Hindi (their inclusion in a dictionary of the Hindi language is

[9] Krišancandar, *Ajantā se āge*, Dillī, 1948, pp. 11–12.
[10] Kṛšnacandra, *Pūre cāṅd kī rāt*, Dillī, pp. 4–5.

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evidence of the fact)[11] occur in the Urdu text. Nevertheless, these words are changed in the Hindi version for Sanskrit loans which are more frequent in literary Hindi than their Arabic-Iranian synonyms. These pairs of stylistic synonyms include *darakht – vṛkša* 'tree'; *katār – pankti* 'line'; *khatam – samāpt* 'finished'; *āhistā – dhīre* 'slowly'; *kištī – nāv* 'boat'; *markaz – madhya* 'centre'.

Further examples of Hindi and Urdu texts relating to social-political subjects are given below.

Hindi text[12]	*Urdu text*[13]
bhārat *ke* ***svādhīnatā divas***	***hindustān*** *ke* ***yaume āzādī***
ke ***avasar*** *par* ***"soviyat***	*ke* ***mauke*** *par* ***"soviyat***
bhūmi" *kā* ***sampādak maṇḍal***	***des"*** *kī* ***majlise idārat***
apne ***sabhī bhāratīya***	*apne* ***tamām hindustānī***
pāṭhakoṅ *ko* ***badhāī***	***kāriīn*** *ko* ***mubārakbād***
detā hai.	*detī hai.*

On the **occasion** of **Independence Day** of **India** the **editorial board** of **"Soviet Land"** sends **greetings** to **all** its **Indian readers.**

As is seen from the examples above quoted, the lexical differences between the Hindi and Urdu texts relating to social-political subjects can be considerable. Thus the majority of words in the Hindi text are Sanskritisms; in the Urdu text their Arabic-Iranian synonyms predominate: *bhārat – hindustān* 'India'; *svādhīntā divas – yaume āzādī* 'Day of Independence'; *avasar – maukā* 'occasion'; *sampādak maṇḍal – majlise idārat* 'editorial board'; *bhāratīya – hindustānī* 'Indian'; *pāṭhak – kāriīn* 'readers'. In some cases words from original Hindi may be found in the Hindi; in the Urdu, however, the corresponding words are of Arabic-Iranian origin: *sabhī – tamām* 'all'; *badhāī – mubārakbād* 'greeting'. The examples quoted illustrate cases where the divergence between Hindi and Urdu is greatest and where the only lexical elements common to both versions are the simple verbs. A similarly great divergence between Hindi and Urdu may be seen when "high Hindi" style is employed for the one and "high Urdu" for the other.

In many cases the lexical differences between Hindi and Urdu texts relating to social-political subjects may be less marked, as the following extracts show:

Hindi text	*Urdu text*
maī divas *ke janm kā rozānā ke*	***yaume maī*** *ke janm kā rozānā ke*
kām ke ghaṇṭoṅ meṅ kamī	*kām ke ghaṅtoṅ meṅ kamī*
karvāne ke ***saṅgharš*** *se* ***aṭūṭ***	*karvāne kī* ***tahrīk*** *se* ***gahrā***
sambandh *hai.*	***tālluk*** *hai.*

May Day has a close **connection** with the **movement** for the reduction of hours of daily work.

[11] See Rāmcandra Varmā, *Sankšipt Hindī šabdsāgar*, Kāšī, 1957.
[12] Soviyat Bhūmi, *Naī Dillī*, 25. 08. 58, p. 1.
[13] Soviyat Des, *Naī Dillī*, 25. 08. 58, p. 3.

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yah ***māṅg*** *mazdūr* ***varg*** *ke*	*yah* ***mutālabā*** *mazdūr* ***tabke*** *ke*
liye bahut baṛe ***rājnītik***	*liye bahut baṛī* ***siyāsī***
mahatva *kī hai.*	***ahmiyat*** *rakhtā hai.*

This **demand** has great **political significance** for the working **class.**

yah ***saṅgharš lagbhag*** *tabhī*[14]	*yah* ***tahrīk takrīban*** *tabhī*[15]
se jārī hai, jabki amrīkā meṅ	*se jārī hai jabse amrīkā meṅ*
kārkhānoṅ kī ***vyavasthā*** *kā*	*kārkhānoṅ ke* ***intazām*** *kā*
ārambh *hī huā thā.*	***āgāz*** *huā thā.*

This **movement** has been **going on almost** from the time that they **began** to **establish** factories in America.

There is more similarity in vocabulary to be seen in this passage than in the preceding one. Thus, a few words of Arabic-Iranian origin (*rozānā* 'everyday'; *kamī* 'reduction'; *mazdūr* 'worker'; *jārī* 'in use'; *kārkhānā* 'factory') and words from original old Hindi (*kām* 'work'; *ghaṇṭā* 'hour') are found in both texts. The widely used Sanskrit loanword *janm* ('birth') is also common to both of them. There may also be seen here lexical differences in the use of different stylistic synonyms. As usual, this means that there are loans from Sanskrit in the Hindi, as more consistent with it, while the Urdu presents their Arabic-Iranian synonyms: *saṅgharš – tahrīk* 'movement'; *sambandh – tālluk* 'connection'; *rājnītik – siyāsī* 'political'; *mahatva – ahmiyat* 'significance'; *lagbhag – takrīban* 'nearly'; *vyavasthā – intazām* 'organisation'; *ārambh – āgāz* 'beginning'. Sometimes widely used synonyms of Arabic-Iranian origin in the Urdu may correspond to some words of original Hindi which occur in the Hindi text (*māṅg – mutālabā* 'demand'). More rarely, some words of original Hindi found in the Hindi version can correspond to synonyms in the Urdu text which are properly speaking also Hindi words (*aṭūṭ* 'indestructible'; *gahrā* 'close'). But what we have in that case is not a stylistic feature but an ideographic synonymity.

The net result of comparing Hindi and Urdu texts can lead us to conclude that the whole lexical problem of modern Hindi and Urdu in fact reflects the existence of different styles in one and the same language which make use in varying degrees of the etymologically divergent layers of the vocabulary. The problem of Hindi and Urdu is a problem of stylistic lexical synonymity in one and the same language, a problem of the pecularities of usage in the choice of synonyms appropriate to these various styles of the language. The whole of this varied system of stylistic synonyms in Hindi and Urdu goes to enrich the lexical resources of the language.

Different kinds of texts may show a greater or smaller degree of lexical identity or divergence in the use made of the stylistic synonyms characteristic of a given style.

[14] E. Traikṭanbarg, *Maī divas kā itihās*, Bambaī, 1953, p. 3.
[15] E. Traikṭanbarg, *Yaume maī kī tārīkh*, Delhī, p. 3.

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Some texts when they are compared with one another reveal no lexical differences i. e. they have no interchangeable stylistic nuance. A comparison of Hindi and Urdu texts of that type yields no pairs of stylistic synonyms. This is evidence that in this case we are dealing with a neutral style of the language.

However it is more usual for Hindi and Urdu texts to exhibit their specific lexical and stylistic features, both versions of such texts showing a considerable degree of identity in vocabulary, the vocabulary of original Hindi and words of Arabic-Iranian origin which have come into common use in both languages being well represented in both. They will also show lexical differences. In the one case there will appear words that are more appropriate to Hindi; in the other their stylistic synonyms characteristic of Urdu. Thus in the Hindi text there occur various loans from Sanskrit, while in the Urdu either the corresponding synonyms of Arabic-Iranian origin or, more rarely, original old Hindi words. Here the vocabulary of the Hindi text will be drawn basically from the following word-groups:

(1) words belonging to original old Hindi;
(2) words of Arabic-Iranian origin;
(3) a small number of loans from Sanskrit which also occur in Urdu;
(4) loans from Sanskrit, corresponding to Arabic-Iranian forms in the Urdu text.

The language of the Urdu text will contain:

(1) words from the original old Hindi vocabulary;
(2) words of Arabic-Iranian origin (in common with words of Arabic-Iranian origin occurring in Hindi);
(3) a small number of loans from Sanskrit (in common with the Hindi text);
(4) words of Arabic-Iranian origin (corresponding to the majority of Sanskrit loans occurring in the Hindi).

The proportion in which these groups are represented varies in the works of different authors.

The greatest divergence between Hindi and Urdu texts (that is, the greatest development of stylistic synonyms) can be found not in the language of artistic literature but in works on specialized subjects, in particular social-political matters. In this case the Hindi text can be almost entirely made up of Sanskritisms (with the exception of personal pronouns and simple verbs), and the Urdu text of the corresponding synonyms of Arabic-Iranian origin. If the writer of the Hindi text is not a supporter of "pure (i. e. completely sanskritized) Hindi", the part of the vocabulary common to Hindi and Urdu may be extended in such texts. It may be increased by the use in the Hindi text of a number of words of Arabic-Iranian derivation which have come to be widely used in the language. In this case the Hindi and Urdu texts will not only coincide as regards personal pronouns and the simple verbs, but also in the case of a number of nouns and adjectives. Thus a comparison of modern Hindi and Urdu texts shows that they always (1) possess an identical element and (2) usually mix this with a second element by introducing differences in stylistic synonyms. At the initial point of reciprocity between Hindi and Urdu the area of lexical identity is equal to 100% of the entire vocabulary, i. e. in this case the Hindi and Urdu texts com-

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pletely coincide. As it gradually diminishes (in the other texts quoted) the common element can be reduced to 30%, and the second element – the difference in stylistic synonyms – may increase in proportion to 70%. This position can be observed both in the spoken and the written word.

In contemporary India those who know literary Hindi have an increasing opportunity to acquaint themselves with literary Urdu and its vocabulary. In particular, this is ensured by the work of the Delhi publishing firm "Rajpal and Sons." Over a number of years these publishers have been bringing out a series in many volumes of the works of medieval and modern Urdu poets in Hindi script. Many works of Urdu prose literature are also published in Hindi without any alteration or "translating". In some cases Urdu writers simultaneously become Hindi authors by "translating" their own works from Urdu into Hindi. The work of these writers becomes an integral part both of Urdu and Hindi literature. Among these authors we might particularly cite Hansraj Rahbar of Delhi. Many writers who use Hindi script produce their works both in the style of "ordinary Urdu" which are understood by wide sections of the reading public. All this shows that at the present time the process of the convergence of Hindi and Urdu continues.

In recent years the proposal to introduce a single system of writing for all the languages has frequently been raised in India. This is extremely important also for Hindi and Urdu. In particular, the prime Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Pandit Ravishankar Shukla, has made a statement in which he proposes the introduction of one script for all the languages of India[16]. The solution of this problem would do away with the external (graphical) difference between Hindi and Urdu and would be favourable to a still greater enrichment of their common vocabulary.

The publication in recent years in India of a number of Urdu-Hindi dictionaries is of great importance for a knowledge of all the specific features both of literary Hindi and literary Urdu. One of these dictionaries[17] is intended for those who have been educated in Urdu and wish to acquaint themselves with the corresponding vocabulary used in Hindi literature. The Arabic-Iranian vocabulary of Urdu in this dictionary, therefore, is arranged according to the Urdu alphabet. The entries are in the following form. The word is given at the beginning in Urdu script, and then in Hindi script, followed by a transcription in Latin character. The definitions are divided under separate headings, corresponding to the various meanings of the word. The synonyms found in Hindi are given in the entries in both Hindi and Urdu character. This dictionary can also be used in reading Urdu literature in Urdu script by those who are familiar with the vocabulary of Hindi. However, for many people who have been educated in Hindi and are not familiar with Urdu character, Urdu literary works, as stated above, can be published in Hindi script entirely in the original i. e. without changing specifically Urdu words for their Hindi equivalents. Two other Urdu-Hindi dictionaries[18] [19] have been published to

[16] *Deš kī caudahoṅ mukhya bhāṣāoṅ kī ek lipi ho*. Hindustān, Naī Dillī, 22. 08. 56.
[17] *Urdu-Hindi Dictionary*. Aligarh, Anjuman Taraqqi-e Urdu (Hind), 1955.
[18] Kedār Nāth Bhaṭṭ, *Urdū-Hindī koṣ*, Ilāhābād, 1955.
[19] Karišankar Šarmā, *Hindustānī koṣ*, Āgrā.

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facilitate the reading of such texts. Like the one already mentioned, these dictionaries contain the vocabulary of Arabic-Iranian origin and synonyms characteristic for Hindi. However, these dictionaries differ from the first type in that they are set up entirely in Hindi character, and consequently the entries in them are not given in the order of the Urdu alphabet but according to the Hindi alphabet. All these works are in fact dictionaries of Urdu-Hindi stylistic synonyms.

As remarked above, Urdu materials may be published in Hindi. In some cases when an Urdu text is published in a Hindi journal without substituting synonyms, some of the words belonging to the vocabulary of "high Urdu" or Urdu terminology which may not be understood by people who have a Hindi education are followed by the Hindi synonyms in brackets. A specimen of a text of this kind is given below:

Dūsrā sabab zarā ***tārīk*** *(=* ***andhakār****) pahlū ko peš kartā hai. Urdū šāyarī kā sab se baṛā hissā aur sabse kābilekadr sarmāyā gazal kī* ***sinf*** *(=* ***šilp****) meṅ hai . . . gazal āj bhī zindā hai aur āj bhī nayī* ***alāmatoṅ*** *(=* ***pratīkoṅ****) ke sāth likhī jā rahī hai.*[20]

"The second reason brings in a somewhat **darker** aspect. The largest part and the most valuable body of Urdu poetry lies in the genre of the ghazal . . . The Ghazal is still alive today and today it is being written with new **images**"

A very original method is adopted in the paper "Nayā Hind". This magazine is intended both for those who know Hindi script and those who know Urdu. Hence the whole of its contents is printed twice; the matter is given in Hindi character (from left to right) on the left hand column of the page and the same text is printed in Urdu character (from right to left) on the righthand side. In both versions where Urdu words occur that may not be understood by readers of Hindi literature, their Hindi synonyms are added in brackets. Thanks to this method Hindi knowing readers can become acquainted with the specific vocabulary of Urdu, and those who know Urdu can learn the vocabulary peculiar to Hindi. We give below a specimen text from this journal.[21]

Na maiṅ urdū kā ***adīb (sāhityakār)*** *aur* ***musannif (lekhak)*** *hūṅ, na maiṅ ne urdū kī koī* ***khās khidmat*** *anjām dī hai. phir bhī āpne mujhe is kursī ke kābil samjhā yah mere liye* ***bāise fakhr (garv kā kāraṇ)*** *hai. Is* ***izzat afzāī (mān barhāne)*** *ke liye* ***mamnūn (ābhārī)*** *hūṅ. Maiṅ urdū aur hindī donoṅ kā bhalā cāhtā hūṅ. Donoṅ kī tarakkī kā dil se* ***khāhāṅ (icchuk)*** *hūṅ.*

"I am neither a **man of Letter** nor a **writer of Ordu**, nor have I performed any particular service to Urdu, and yet you have judged me worthy of this chair; that is for me a **reason** to feel **proud**. I **appreciate** this **honour**. I wish well to both Urdu and Hindi. I heartily **wish** that both may flourish."

This method of printing parallel Hindi and Urdu texts and inserting synonyms in the text where they are necessary, has resulted in increasing the identical element in the Hindi and Urdu texts to a hundred percent, in spite of the occurrence of specifically Urdu and Hindi expressions. This is achieved because the

[20] Vahīd Akhtār, *Urdū kī nayī šāyarī*, Kalpanā, Haidarābād, N 110, 1960, pp. 21–22.
[21] Tārāchand, *Urdū, Hindī aur bhāšā kā savāl*. Nayā Hind, Ilāhābād, Māre 1958, p. 162.

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second element – the stylistic differences in synonyms – has been reduced to zero by using pairs of Urdu-Hindi synonyms.

Thus there were a number of important differences in Hindi and Urdu literature before the XIX century: (1) script, (2) dialect, (3) subject matter, (4) differences in figures of speech, and (5) vocabulary. In modern Hindi and Urdu current in India the dialect differences have disappeared. A marked convergence is also to be seen in subject matter. The specific peculiarities of imagery have also become less. In a number of cases the lexical differences between Hindi and Urdu are reduced to nil. The difference in script continues to be maintained due to tradition. It is clear from the examples quoted in this article that the problem of contemporary Hindi and Urdu reflects the existence of two styles in the language with a rich system of stylistic synonyms, and that Hindi and Urdu are not two distinct languages, but the sum total of different styles of the same language. The measures now being taken in India with the intention of acquainting the speakers of the language with all its styles, with all its wealth of vocabulary, are in accordance with actual vital needs. This mutual familiarizing of all styles of the language and their special features will bring Hindi and Urdu closer together and lead to the gradual formation of a single literary tradition for both Hindi and Urdu. All this is part of a regular process in the formation of a single national language.

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III

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The Freedom Movement in Mewat and Dr. K. M. Ashraf

Chowdhry Abdul Haye

Introduction

I have been given the honour, as one of the contributors to this book, to write something about Dr. Ashraf's work and ideas in connection with Mewat.

To write on these matters for the volume in commemoration of Dr. Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf's work and services, published by the Institute for Oriental Studies, German Academy of Sciences, Berlin, is a happiness for which I am indeed grateful. I was asked to be brief, and I might well take this advice on the plea of disguising my lack of education and ability to express myself clearly; but how was I to shorten all the thirty years that I have witnessed his merits and his saint-like devotion in the service of mankind?

Our learned friends, the authors of this memorial volume to Dr. Ashraf, have known him as a thinker, a writer, a fine teacher of history, a notable research worker, a wonderful speaker, a follower of the Marxist way of life, a man of great learning in Marxism-Leninism. But in addition to being a thinker and a logician, he was also a good general. That is known to very few people. Whatever may be written by our friends, those qualities will find their practical demonstration in Mewat.

Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi was his right hand in every movement in Mewat, and I too had the honour of being concerned in all that happened there. It may appear to some, I fear, as though my account of Dr. Ashraf is my own autobiography. If this narrative that I am writing as a friend of Dr. Ashraf seems too long, I trust that the reader will forgive me.

I

A short introduction to the country of Mewat and the Meo nation

A brief introduction to the Mewat country and in particular to the Meo nation, seems necessary before speaking of Dr. Ashraf's work and services in that connection. I therefore present these few lines to the reader.

The present region of Mewat consists of the districts at the junction of Alwar and Bharatpur in Rajasthan with Gurgaon in the Panjab. The extent of the region in different periods has been described by Indian historians. The area inhabited by the Meo nation decreased in proportion to the cruel oppressions inflicted on them. For example, before the attack by Shahabuddin Ghauri the entire area between

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Delhi and Ajmeer was described as Mewat. The Meos fought a defensive battle against Shahabuddin near Ajmeer. In the days of the Moghul Kings the area of Mewat decreased. In the Moghul period, Mewat was a province under the control of the heir-apparent as part of his personal *jagir*. Narnaul and Rewari Khas became separated from the Mewat of that period; hence no Meo population is found there any more. All that survives of the Meos of those days are a few wells and ancient ruins which, as revenue documents show, were named after Meo personages. The Mewat of today still inhabited by Meos is the remnant that survived the National Revolt of 1857. Rebellions against the Muslim kings, continuous extermination and frequent famines were responsible for the decrease in territory and the dispersal of the Meo nation through the whole of Northern India. Today the Meo population in Mewat itself is less than the number of those scattered over India and Pakistan. Even before the Independence of 1947, apart from the Mewat area there were Meo settlements in the Central Indian States of Gwalior and Dattia, and in the region of Malwar. In addition, there are whole villages of concentrated settlement in the districts of Agra, Mathura, Aligarh, Bulandshahar, Kanpur, Lucknow and especially Bareilly in U. P. The partition of India threw some 800,000 Meos into Pakistan. The native hearth and home of Mewat, which we shall deal with in connection with Dr. Ashraf, still has a population of 400,000.

The region of Mewat extends from the village of Bandsi near Gurgaon to Bandikoti railway junction in Rajasthan in the south; then eastwards from the village of Bichhur in the southern portion of Gurgaon and to the west the boundary goes up to the village of Khushhalbas in the district of Alwar. There are other peoples living in Mewat besides the Meos. Of these the Rajputs, both Hindu and Muslim, and particularly the Meena people or Meenawati (Hindus) belong to the same stock.

The Meo nation is first mentioned in written history in the time of Prithviraj Rasa, when they fought a great war against Prithviraj. Situated near the capital, Delhi, they were always troublesome to the Muslim Kings in every period. The Meos are the oldest nucleus of Islam in India yet even to-day they pride themselves more on being Chatriyas than Muslims. The social relations existing between the Hindus and the Meo *pals* in Mewat and its surroundings are the same as those that define the various communities of Hindu castes.

As to the origin of the Meos, Dr. Ashraf often said that they were not Chatriyas but tribes that had come from Central Asia.

In order to break the political power of the Meos, Nasir-u'dlin Mahmud devised a political trick. Having won over a leading chief *(sardar)* of the Meo nation, the Balot Meo Kakurana, he changed the people's caste organizations, called them tribes *(qabila)*, and thus divided the Meos. Hence the twelve big tribes or groups, that is the twelve *pals* and fifty-two small lineages or groups (which) were called *Got* [*Gotra*]. The thirteenth division of the Pahat Meos was opposed to this political manoeuvre on the part of the king, and hence was not called a *pal* but came to be known as the *Palakara*[1], so that in this way the large group of Meos was divided

[1] A diminutive of '*pal*'.

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into sixty-five divisions. The greater chowdhries were given police authority and were appointed throughout Mewat to enforce this division. Thus the importance of the Balot *pal* was lost and it became a minority. The present *pal* system of Mewat is more developed than the *pal* system of Kakurana Balot. From the very beginning the Hindu Meos were organized regionally. In the Meo *pals* of today the members are not only Meos; Hindus living in the area who are pledged to observe the rules of the particular *pal* are adopted into it and have an equal standing with other members in the affairs of the *pal*. The *pals* differ considerably in the number of villages and the population which they include. For instance Demrot *pal*, which includes both Demrot Meos (Muslims) and Demrot Meena (Hindus), has a total membership of 757. How a *pal* or a village should be defined is yet to be clarified. According to the old definition Chakrawat *pal* has $94^{3}/_{4}$ villages. In certain *pals* the hereditary leaders are the descendants of those appointed by the king and accepted by the *pal*. In others the chowdhries must be accepted by the brotherhood [the *bradari*]. In some the chowdhry is not permanent. The chowdhries change as their influence waxes or wanes. It is the custom when a chowdhry dies and his successor is elected, for the chowdhries of other *pals* to take part in the ceremonies of *dastar-bandi* and *pagri bandi*. They bind the turban on his head and make presents in cash according to their means. The money and the turbans are provided from the funds of their panchayats. This democratic system of Mewat is something quite different from the national unity of modern India. The *pal* system is a strong, unbreakable bond in comparison with which national unity is an artificial and formal tie. The quarrels that arise out of the affairs of everyday life, particularly over land and women, lead to internal fights among themselves. In these armed encounters the Hindus and Muslims of one *pal* fight the Hindus and Muslims of another regardless of religion. Before 1947 the people of Mewat had no conception of a Hindu-Muslim riot. They used to laugh when they heard of Hindu-Muslim riots in other parts of India. In addition to deciding affairs connected with marriage, birth and death, the men of the *pal bradari* also come together to settle disputes between different *pals*. In Mewat, where even today people still drink wine, Muslims and Hindus drink together. This happens especially at marriages. They try to outdo one another in giving money to the bards *(mirasi)* who recite poems in praise of their ancestors' bravery. (When Dr. Ashraf began his visits to Mewat he witnessed many such gatherings where he saw this clear demonstration of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood and unity.)

After the Alwar movement, Dr. Ashraf was very anxious not only that this Hindu-Muslim unity in Mewat should be preserved but that its scope should be widened and [considered that] it would be better if these people could be kept away from the monopolists of religion. Dr. Ashraf's own village is Tasi,[2] a village of the Muslim Rajputs and belonging to the *bradari* of Pahat *pal*. The Rajputs of Tasi adopted Islam later than the Meos. The disturbances of 1947 made this

[2] This does not mean the village in which he was born but the traditional home of his ancestors. Actually Dr. Ashraf had never been there before 1960. [P. M. A.]

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Rajput hamlet *(tehra)* once more a Hindu village. When Dr. Ashraf visited his village for the last time before leaving for Berlin, he made a point of it that his relations with the Meo Muslims must remain what they had always been in the past. In spite of the two different religions in Mewat the brotherhood of the old lineages and families remains unchanged. Although they were a minority the Meo Muslims never suffered from any feeling of inferiority before the disturbances of 1947. For in practice here no grounds existed by reason of which a minority might fear the majority. The Meos are both Muslims and Chatris. A fight between a Hindu and a Meo Muslim Chatri was no less harmful than between Hindu and Hindu. It was just as hurtful for a Hindu to fight a Meo Muslim Chatri as for a Hindu to fight a Hindu. Moreover, there was no large group of Muslims in Mewat or the surrounding country, which, disregarding the Hindus, could have had political connections outside even with other Muslims. The Hindus were either the brothers or the enemies of the Meos of Mewat; that was all. But within the brotherhood of the *pal* system the difference had no practical existence. The Meos celebrated marriages like the Hindus, and except for *nikar*, all the rites were the same as the Hindu.

II

The influence of Islam on the Meos

Very few historians have written in full on the conversion of the Meos to Islam. Munshi Omar Khan of Begampur, Delhi Province, held the opinion that when Mahmud Ghaznavi attacked the temple of Somnath and all the rajas, maharajas and peoples of India fought against him, the Meos, who had already accepted Islam, also at that time fought alongside the Hindus. At the hour of prayer they separated from the Hindus to offer their prayers. As regards property relations – *jagir*, *jaedad* and *milkiyat* – the Meos followed Hindu custom. Land, in particular, is not divided according to Islam and daughters receive no share in it. The political system of the Meos was not changed after their conversion to Islam. They pay neither *zakat* nor *kherat*.

What is new is that the Meos became Deobandi Muslims. The Deobandi Ulema, on account of their strong opposition to the British, supported the Congress. Consequently, due to the influence of the Ulema particularly after 1947, through fear of the government and in accordance with their faith, they [the Meos] were with the Congress. Only Muslim League Meos who had joined the League because of their opposition to Yasin[3], had any contact with other Muslims. The [local] Congress that was formed among the Meos under the influence of Dr. Ashraf before Independence, differed from the Congress of today. At the present time the Meos have joined the Congress, because of the Ulema who are in it, as a refuge, for they fear the government and the communalists.

[3] See p. 315 below.

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The Meo Muslims had no relations with the Muslim kings as their co-religionists. Against those of them who sought to oppress them excessively, the Meos rebelled. The battle of Panch Pahar is the story of a long battle fought by the Meo people of what is now Bharatpur District against the armies of Muslim kings whose commanders were Hindu Rajputs. In a well called Alakh in the village of Baloj in Bharatpur District, are still to be found fragments of the glass bangles belonging to the heroic women who broke the blockade in order to worship the well und died or committed *Sati*, or who broke their bangles after the death of their husbands. So much Meo blood was spilled on this jungle soil that to this very day the traces of it may be seen in the rainy season.

According to administrative divisions, Mewat was divided into three parts, namely Alwar, Bharatpur and Gurgaon, Maharaja Jaisingh Swai, who was a Chatri by caste and belonged to the Narokar Rajputs, was the ruler of Alwar state. The two Meo *pals*, Sangal and Dhangal, and the Maharaja of Alwar all belong to the same lineage, the Kachwaha. Meos participated along with Rajputs in the foundation of the state of Alwar. At the time of the Alwar movement, the Meos had no political status at the court of Alwar. In the early days of Alwar state certain Meo regions were exempted from revenue tax. This was later abolished. Before the Alwar movement, the Jat ruler of Bharatpur, Maharaja Barijindar Singh, was a small raja like that of Alwar. The relations between the Meos and the Jat rajas had never been good. The Meos never paid much regard to either of these princes for they prided themselves that as a nation they had a more important status in India than these two rajas, and that in India's national wars they had always fought against the invaders. A part of Mewat in the district of Gurgaon came under the Panjab government, and here the conditions for education among the people were better than in the princely states. In 1922 a Congress committee was founded at Firozepur Jhirka, which was sternly suppressed from the very beginning. Hindus and non-Meo Muslims (Landawat) are members of Bhagoria *pal* and an armed clash with the government on their behalf was narrowly avoided. The Meos attacked a police station and by force freed the congressmen. Throughout Mewat, whether in Alwar, Bharatpur or Gurgaon, there was in fact a state of political inertia. All the Meos were small land owners. There was not a trace of any factory. Before the British came salt used to be extracted from wells in the neighbourhood of Nuh. The British stopped it. Poverty was widespread. All means of release from this misery was beyond their capacity and no Meo could imagine the removal of this poverty. It was their belief that poverty and riches were God's will.

Subconsciously there was hidden anger against the government's treatment. When occasion arose the pressure of the government, whether economic exploitation, physical insult or violence, was always resisted. Clashes with government agents were common. The verse *Mahabharat* by the Mewat poet Sadullah used to fire the Meos' imagination. They felt inspired by the courageous deeds described in the ballads of the battle of Panch Pahar, or the raid on Dholagarh, and the like.

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III

The beginning of complaints against the court of Alwar

No great uprising took place after the rebellion of 1857. Some forty or fifty years ago, Landawat Pal, otherwise commonly known as Bhagoria Pal after the name of its largest village, Bhagora, fortified themselves in the village of Kulhana during a prolonged struggle. A minor incident occurred when the Meo peasants brought their families and cattle and assembled in front of the Maharaja of Alwar's palace to protest against an increase in the revenue tax.

Maharaja Jaisingh Swai once increased the revenue tax before the first Alwar movement of 1933–34. The whole state refused to pay it and the Rajputs occupied the village of Nemchhana. The chowdhries of Mewat were invited to Alwar and entertained for two or three days. They were shown all the trappings of grandeur, the expenditure on English guests, the expenses of the royal household, the elephant houses, the garages, the new troops and the military band. The prestige of Alwar was cunningly presented to them as a matter of their own dignity and the payment or non-payment of the revenue was left to them. The Meo peasants were delighted by this trick and after promising not only to pay their taxes but to render any other aid that the Maharaja might need, they returned home.

Dr. Ashraf belonged to this poor region whose maharaja squandered the entire income of the state on luxurious living and the display of his own greatness, while state employees subsisted on a pittance. Dr. Ashraf's father had served in the British army and he therefore had a better chance to get a proper education than the common people could afford. While studying for his LL. B. at Aligarh Dr. Ashraf made the acquaintance of the Maharaja of Alwar at the Jubilee of that University; they became friends and the Maharaja sent him to London at his own expense for further education. Dr. Ashraf was by birth a man of this poor and backward region. He always worried about how to get rid of this poverty and backwardness, and he knew no rest all his days. The last letter which he wrote to me from Berlin bears witness. His sense of our sorrows was the cause of his heart failure. While he lived at Berlin he was eager for news from every part of India; he worried about our welfare and the troubles and anxieties of every child of Mewat went to his heart.

The conscious desire to drive the British out of India was then awakening. The British were doing their utmost to divert this consciousness and to strengthen their position so as to remain in India. The Maharaja of Alwar was pro-British and was known as "the son of the king (or queen) of England". The struggle of the people of Mewat against the Maharaja of Alwar was a reflection of this common political consciousness of India; those peoples and nations that had hitherto had no political existence were trying to gain a place in political life – here in the name of religion, elsewhere in the name of the country, or again in the name of the nationality. The Alwar movement was a part of this spontaneous awakening in which

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the oppressed people of Alwar tried to establish their economic and social rights. Dr. Ashraf had not only known the Maharaja of Alwar before he came into the movement but for a long time a personal friendship had existed between them. As personal adviser, Dr. Ashraf had participated in the government of the Court of Alwar. At that time he had witnessed the misdeeds of the feudal system in the palaces and the evil ways of this filthy environment. When the cunning and treachery of it became intolerable to him, he feigned illness and left the court without informing the Maharaja. His participation in the Alwar movement answered his heart's desire and was what the times demanded.

IV

Dr. Ashraf's part in the Alwar movement and my first meeting with him

I met Dr. Ashraf for the first time in 1933–34 in Nuh in the days of the Alwar movement. At that time Nuh, an old salt manufacturing provincial town, was the centre of the Meo nation's new political life. There is a national high school here known as the Braine Meo High School. The office of the All India Meo Panchayat was there. The Headquarters of the Alwar movement was in this office. This Alwar peasant movement turned into a national movement of the Meo people and for that reason Meos outside Alwar state were also obliged to take part in it. The hero of the Alwar movement was Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan L. M. A., Panjab. Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi was his political advisor. The Meos regard Syed Sahib as the life and soul of the Alwar movement, and that was indeed so.

Although I am still officially and in name the secretary of the All India Meo Panchayat, at that time there was good reason for it. I was treasurer and in charge of the kitchen. The office work and the activities of the volunteers were my responsibility. As it was I who had to look after the guests, many friends who took part in the movement used to joke that I was the owner of the house. This was their testimonial to my services.

The Alwar movement was a peasant movement that began as a struggle for the recognition of the religious rights of the Muslims in Alwar city. The Muslims of Alwar wished to "lay the sheet" on the tomb of a saint. In the Maharaja's absence the government servants obstructed them. Hindus were called in from outlying villages and a riot was provoked. The Muslims of Alwar appealed to the people of Alwar Mewat, with whom they were connected through the Palbandi system, to take part in this religious struggle. In its final form the movement included the Meo peasants' demands against revenue and taxation, and those of the poor weavers and working people also. This spontaneous movement was given organized shape on the advice of Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan and Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi. The movement is popularly known as *Alwar Kardgi* and also as *Meo gardi*.

The peasants of Alwar had had enough of the government's economic exploitation. Maharaja Jaisingh Swai had raised the revenue to four times the old amount.

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Octroi, grazing tax, tail tax on all kinds of beasts including sheep, goats, camels, horses, donkeys, cows, bulls, buffaloes and so on, elephant tax, servants tax, various cruel taxes for entertaining guests and personal religious rites, and forced labour *(begar)* had been imposed. The Muslims were refused permission to open Arabic schools. The villages were very short of schools at a time when there was a primary school every two miles in the Gurgaon District. The establishment of these schools had made a strong impression on the neighbouring population in Alwar due to their common nationality. In addition to the burden of taxation, the greatest distress was caused by the Maharaja's hunting expeditions to the forests and his scheme for breeding pigs for hunting. These wild pigs destroyed the peasants' fields. It was forbidden to strike them and anyone who killed them was severely punished. It was forbidden to erect high boundaries in the fields because that would hinder the free movement of the sows in litter. The peasants were obliged to leave their houses and camp in the open even on winter nights to watch their fields. They felt this to be in practice a hindrance to their productive labour. The Muslims expressed their hatred of the Maharaja seeing it as his intention to freeze them all to death. The people of the state praised certain of the Maharaja's personal qualities, and he might perhaps have kept his throne to the end of his life but for the misdeeds and barbarities committed by his communal-minded, short-sighted advisors and noblemen, so that when the people were driven past endurance, they rose up to fight them. This was why, even when their demands were fulfilled, it was thought better that the government should relieve the Maharaja of his authority and that the government should function under the supervision of the British. In India, as has been said above, the Maharaja was regarded as the son of the king (or queen) of England. He was President of the Chamber of Princes. The Governor-General and every high ranking English official who visited India was sure to be entertained as a guest at Alwar also. The state of Alwar was a fine hunting preserve for English tourists. Many rajas and maharajas and even the Muslim national leaders of India used to be invited. Hakim Ajmal Khan and Maulana Ali Johar were particular friends of the Maharaja of Alwar. Compared with other maharajas and nawabs, Maharaja Jaisingh Swai was considered to be a progressive individual. Banquets in both eastern and western style were given at his table. The Maharaja of Alwar did, no doubt, desire to see a new kind of society in India, but in practice he regarded the present nobility as the true heirs to the British power. He was in favour of the superiority of Hindu nationalism in India. No increase in the state income was sufficient to meet his growing expenditure and rising standards. When the administration is cruel, reactionary, communal, bigoted and short-sighted, the burden is felt a thousandfold by the people. The Alwar movement arose out of the following action of the officials. The Muslims of Alwar city observed an annual custom of laying a sheet on a certain holy tomb. On the day appointed the Maharaja had gone away, perhaps to Mount Abu. The officials responsible in his absence, because of their communal ideas and their ignorant bigotry, committed an injustice against the Muslims; they brought in Hindus from the surrounding country and provoked a riot. Later even the Maharaja

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was unable to check this religious frenzy. Things became so bad that the Muslims of Alwar decided to migrate and whole caravans of them pitched their tents on the steps of the Jama Masjid in Delhi, intending to lay their grievances before the British Government. They appealed to the country people of Alwar for help on the basis of their *palbandi*. This struggle of the city folk fanned the hidden spark of the village people's grievances. On the basis of the *pal* system and common nationality they called upon the whole of Mewat for aid. And in this way the incident over the honouring of the tomb grew into the Alwar movement, with the result that the Maharaja himself was disgraced and shamed for ever. He was banished and was killed suddenly at Paris by a fall from the roof of his hotel. For many years the state of Alwar was administered by British prime ministers under the supervision of the Governor-General. When matters improved, Maharaja Tej Singh was appointed heir to the Maharaja of Alwar and the government of the state was handed over to him. Thus ended the Alwar movement.

V

The Alwar movement before Dr. Ashraf's participation

The Maharaja of Alwar was the supreme ruler of his realms and the progress or decline of the state depended on his mercy. Although he may have desired social progress in India, he did not realize that he was a curse to the people of his own state.

Contrary to all his wishes, a spontaneous movement began in the city of Alwar and spread to the countryside. The Alwar movement had passed through several phases before Dr. Ashraf came into it. The Muslims of Alwar city had migrated to Delhi. In many places the peasants had refused to pay revenue tax and had beaten the Maharaja's officers. Armed demonstrations for withholding taxes had taken place in many towns. In many places the tax collecting outposts had been closed down. The Maharaja had failed in an attempt to disrupt the movement by organising an attack on Meo villages with the help of communal-minded people from the villages adjoining Alwar. During this disturbance the Meos, in a counter-action, plundered and burnt down eight Ahir villages and that crushed the Ahirs. The seeds of mutual hatred were sown among the Ahirs and the Meos who till yesterday had lived together like brothers, and the Meos had to pay the penalty for this during the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1947. Before Ashraf Sahib came to Nuh, a number of Muslim leaders, such as Haji Sir Rahimbaksh of Karnal, the tutor of the Nawab of Bhawalpur, Sayid Ghulam Bhik Nairang of Ambala, Maulana Daud Ghaznavi of the Panjab and many other leaders, had taken part in the Alwar movement. But Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan and Syed Mutalabi were suspicious of all Muslim leaders from Delhi and the Panjab. A lull came in the Alwar movement and subscriptions began to fall off. The leaders were looking for an honourable way to end it but could see no light anywhere. The Maharaja tried to

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persuade Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan to settle the matter, promising him rank and money. This had no result. To accept the people's economic demands would have meant that the Maharaja would have had to live like an ascetic. It was equally impossible to abdicate voluntarily. Both sides were waiting for some fresh move but neither saw how to get the upper hand. Finally the leaders of the movement turned to the Muslim political centre for guidance. At that time Dr. Zahuddin Ahmad was Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University. Both Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan and Syed Mutalabi knew him personally but Dr. Ahmad had no experience of practical politics to fit him to settle the affairs of a state in which ruler and subjects were in conflict.

By chance the Mewati leaders met Dr. Ashraf through Saiyed Mohammad Tonki. They were pleased to hear that Dr. Ashraf was from Alwar. Dr. Ashraf's information about the Alwar movement gathered from newspapers, was insufficient. As a newcomer he was anxious to find out more about the affairs of the state. After hearing a full report, Dr. Ashraf's advice to these people convinced them of his sympathy, ability and political wisdom. His eloquence and his knowledge of the internal conditions at the court amazed Chowdhry Sahib and Syed Sahib. When they had listened to Dr. Ashraf they felt enthusiastic and that they had found a remedy for their ills. Finally Ashraf Sahib promised to take part in the movement. When I met him at Nuh he had come to acquaint himself with the movement.

The Hindus in the state like the Muslims had also had enough of the Maharaja but they kept aloof from the movement. Among the Muslims themselves there were also some hired henchmen of the Maharaja who weakened the movement by keeping people away from it. Some people praised his [the Maharaja's] generosity. The Meos alone were extremists; the other peasants were inactive. Under these conditions it was as easy to remove Maharaja Jaisingh Swai as to dig a canal of milk.

When Dr. Ashraf came to acquaint himself with the movement, he was introduced to many people. Ashraf Sahib was an elegant, pleasant young man with a gift of winning people to him for ever at their first meeting. Like someone surprised at seeing a child he has known grown into a young man, he eyed me critically from head to foot and said jokingly; "Chowdhry Sahib, you look like a big aristocrat." Then he embraced me and said, "Syed Sahib, I am going to get a lot of work out of young people like this." Perhaps Syed Sahib had already told him about me in my absence. The young man for whom Ashraf Sahib had such a lot of work could never sit in peace and wandering in the desert of politics became his occupation.

In addition to the chowdhries Dr. Ashraf met all the active workers in the movement. He was eager to meet all the responsible people with the exception of Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan, who was pro-government, and therefore Dr. Ashraf was suspicious of him. Chowdhry Sahib for his part wished to dispel his doubts by introducing all these people to him. When presenting Dr. Ashraf he would say, "Dr. Ashraf comes from Tasi village in Kator tehsil, Alwar state. Tasi is in Pahat *pal*, on the border of Mewat and Meenawat. He is our own Mewati. He has

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just returned from his studies in England. From today he has taken all the work of the struggle against the raja into his own hands. The people of Alwar have their own state. They have their own Maharaja. They may keep him in Alwar or make him the King of Delhi if they like. We from the British territory (the part of India under direct British rule was called the British area) have taken this struggle upon ourselves."

VI

Dr. Ashraf's participation in the Alwar movement ends the deadlock

Dr. Ashraf visited the centres of the Alwar movement, including Firozepur Jhirka, and also the large Meo villages. He met armed men who were always ready when needed to fight the Maharaja's troops. He inspected their guns, gunpowder and muskets. These people were very much surprised when Dr. Ashraf told them how to make better gunpowder, how to look after their arms, what tactics are necessary in an armed struggle, how one should keep the initiative in one's own hands and so on. He told them that one should prevent the consolidation of the enemy forces. This is the real key to success in battle. The Meos could hardly believe that an educated man could fight, let alone be a general, but Dr. Ashraf's advice deeply impressed them. Dr. Ashraf visited them on the spot and stimulated their organizational powers. He gave an account of the weakness of the Alwar government and raised their spirits.

In addition to his tour and organizational meetings he also visited our office at Nuh and reformed it. He made us arrange our files in a better way and advised us to start some new ones. He went through the record of income and expenditure and examined the items of expenditure very closely. In particular he checked the large amount spent on the Aheri (?) leaders. He was very surprised to discover an expenditure of 14,000 Rps on the Amritsar newspaper "Masawat". Dr. Ashraf went into everything connected with the movement. He even went into the kitchen and made changes in the preparation of new dishes for the guests so that better food could be provided at less cost.

A new life entered the movement after the arrival of Dr. Ashraf. Young boys began to volunteer to help in arousing anti-government feeling among the people and to collect funds for the movement. Office work increased. Our income grew. In a few days Dr. Ashraf was as much involved in the people of Mewat as if he had been an old friend. Everybody felt as though Dr. Ashraf were a close personal friend of his own. A new spirit appeared after his arrival. The Maharaja was much perturbed at Dr. Ashraf's participation in the movement. He was well aware of Dr. Ashraf's capabilities and his own shortcomings as a ruler. How was he to meet the expenses of government without raising money? How long could he extort taxes and revenue from the people by force? The Maharaja was sure that Dr. Ashraf was well able to realize his weaknesses and to take practical advantage

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of them. In his agitation he adopted a harsh policy. Instead of counselling moderation, his advisors encouraged him to exert still more force. For a courageous leader able to inspire people through his understanding of affairs, it was easy to fight the Maharaja with his rotten feudal mentality, particularly in a situation when the Maharaja's subjects had taken up arms against him. Dr. Ashraf redrafted the charter of popular demands and sent it to the government. He published an account of the court's misdeeds and the demands of the people and distributed it to all foreign representatives. Reports about the people's misery and resentment began to appear in the newspapers. In 1933–34 the demand for the Maharaja's abdication astonished India.

The Maharaja set out to suppress the rising discontent of the people by force, but the more force he used the stronger was the reaction. Tijara, Kishanghar, is a hill region and here the subjects were in a better position militarily. By chance news reached the Maharaja of a panchayat called by Meo peasants to raise funds in the lowland village of Govindghar, and he ordered machine-gun fire. Hundreds of unarmed people were killed and thousands injured. On receiving news of this cruel massacre the Government of India was obliged to intervene. The troops of the Central Government arrived in Alwar, deprived the Maharaja of his authority and handed it over to an English secretary from the central Secretariat who had come with the army and now became the Prime Minister of the state and the representative of the Government of India. Maharaja Jaisingh Swai was banished for two years and sent out of India. During his exile he fell from the roof of a hotel in France and died. The new government restored peace with the help of some Meo military chiefs of Gurgaon. The revenue was reduced by a quarter, some unnecessary taxes were abolished, and other taxes reasonably reduced. The people had already stopped forced labour and the government did not let it be restored. The schools opened by the Meo panchayats during the movement were taken over by the state. New schools were opened in big villages where none had previously existed. The fugitives from Alwar were brought back from Delhi and resettled.

The Alwar movement had ended with the intervention from the Central Government. Syed Mutalabi and the young men who had worked with him in the movement now joined the Congress movement. Dr. Ashraf had already forecast the banishment of the Maharaja, but at the same time he had tried to explain to the wretched people that they would gain little from the British taking over; at a time when the people of India were waking up and trying in particular to expel the British, a well-organized nation ought to unite with them and take part in this struggle. The martial capabilities of the Meo nation should be used against the common enemy. During the Alwar movement Dr. Ashraf tried to explain the tasks of the Indian nation to the Meo youth and advised them to unite with the Congress organization. The reason why no demand for a reform of the government and for popular representation had been raised was that the movement was not led by any political organization. In his opinion the youth of Mewat should in future learn to organize in the Congress for the struggle for the country's independence.

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The Alwar movement was a spontaneous movement and in drawing a lesson from this type of movement it was necessary to prevent opportunists from taking over the leadership of the people. This was a hint at Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan. In the Panjab the Congress movement was directed against the British government and this did not please Mohammad Yasin Khan. He did not wish to oppose the government. Hindus regarded Yasin Khan as a communalist and Yasin Khan called the Hindus communalists. He was prepared to organize the Meos only so far as his own leadership went. Dr. Ashraf had grasped his weakness from the very first meeting with him at Aligarh. He was also convinced from the very beginning of Syed Mutalabi's revolutionary capabilities.

VII

The effect of the Alwar peasant movement in Bharatpur

The removal of the Maharaja of Alwar, the reduction in revenue and taxes, and the achievement of other social and religious liberties, had a great effect on the countryside in the neighbouring state of Bharatpur. The check to the cruelties of the *Jagirdars* (landholders), forced labour and barbarous treatment, also inspired the people of Bharatpur with courage and ambition. What had been won in the state of Alwar was regarded as a victory of the Meo nation, and consequently revolutionary consciousness among the Meos was higher than among other nationalities. The idea of withholding revenue unconsciously spread throughout the Meo population of Bharatpur. The raja of Bharatpur saw that the awakening of revolutionary consciousness among the Meos and a conflict with them would be dangerous. It happened that this movement produced no leader and so the spontaneous unrest was suppressed through the help and efforts of Chowdhry Asmat Khan of Malhakhar Riasatpur. Mr. Batra, the Divan of Bharatpur, was very mild and diplomatic. He visited the office of the All India Meo Panchayat in Gurgaon accompanied by Chowdhry Asmat Khan and a few other chowdhries, and promised Mohammad Yasin Khan and some chowdhries of other *pals* to pay special attention to the progress of the Meo nation. When he came back to Bharatpur he announced in the name of these Meo chowdhries that they had promised to keep away from the movement. The Meo chowdhries of Gurgaon and Dr. Ashraf had already discussed the Bharatpur movement. Dr. Ashraf thought the movement premature, and in fact, the Maharaja of Bharatpur had little trouble in controlling the situation. It was a warning to the Maharaja. Maharaja Krishan Singh, the father of the present Maharaja, had also been deposed on account of irregularities. Maharaja Brajenda Singh took a firm decision to rule better. Although the Meo movement in Bharatpur subsided, the Maharaja knew that many Bharatpur Meos had also been killed at Govindghar. This was proof that besides the Meos of Alwar, those of Bharatpur and the whole of Mewat had taken part in the armed struggle and that they could revolt at any time against Bharatpur. The Meo nation

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won a victory for their people in the Alwar movement without the participation of other peoples and this had raised the spirit among Meos far and wide so that this elevated temper was a permanent threat, especially for Bharatpur. When after a time the Bharatpur Praja Parishad Movement began, the (Meo) people of Bharatpur joined it along with non-Meos, and in this way the Praja Parishad gained support from the Meos of Gurgaon as well. While the awakening among educated people in Bharatpur began under the influence of activities of the Congress in Agra and Mathura before the Alwar movement, it was the success in Alwar that impressed the people and helped to fan the hidden embers.

VIII

The rôle of Dr. Ashraf in the Bharatpur Praja Parishad Movement

Although Dr. Ashraf had taken part in the Alwar movement only for a short time, his political reputation spread far and wide and became a popular demonstration of his ties with Mewat. When Bharatpur patriots started the P. P. Movement, they thought it very important to consult Dr. Ashraf as to how to bring the Bharatpur Meos into this political organization. The Maharaja of Bharatpur did not allow the P. P. to be established in the state, so they ran the movement from Mathura district as their headquarters. They won the support of all the patriots of Mathura. After the Alwar movement Syed Mutalabi and his friends set about organizing the Congress in Gurgaon. Dr. Ashraf could not spare much time for the Bharatpur P. P. on account of his work at Aligarh. Pro-government circles in Aligarh regarded his presence in the University as dangerous and wanted an excuse to get rid of him. That is why instead of himself taking responsibility on behalf of the Mewatis, he advised Syed Mutalabi to join the movement. After that the Congressmen of Gurgaon began to work in support of the Bharatpur P. P. and Dr. Ashraf took part whenever it was necessary. When a conference of the P. P. was held in Punhana, tehsil Firozepur Jhirka in the district of Gurgaon which adjoins Bharatpur, in order to take decisions as to practical measures to force the Maharaja of Bharatpur to accept the people's demands, Dr. Ashraf was specially invited to advise the Meos that they should take part in the movement. Dr. Ashraf had had friends among prominent Congressmen of Agra and Mathura even before that, but as a result of his addressing meetings of political workers and the influence of his organizational abilities, the people of Agra and Mathura became still more active; and thus, on account of Dr. Ashraf's advice, the Gurgaon conference, and particularly Syed Mutalabi and his friends, took part in the movement and also in the satyagrah. In the Bharatpur movement the Meos of Bharathur were organized in the P. P. Chowdhry Amir Khan of Khasti called upon the oppressed people to join the P. P. in their struggle against pro-government Meo *Zeldars* and *Jagidars*. In contrast to the Alwar movement, the Bharatpur movement was a movement of educated people. In Alwar it had been a spontaneous movement

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arising out of the interference on the part of the Maharaja's communalist advisers in the religious affairs of Muslims. The Bharatpur movement was political and from the very first it was begun for the betterment of the people and for their share in the government. By his pleasant manner and impressive speeches at the meetings of political workers and at popular conferences, Dr. Ashraf turned young men into political workers for life.

Due to Dr. Ashraf's presence in congress organizations in Gurgaon, Bharatpur, Mathura and Agra, people began to learn something of Marxism from the outset.

Attendance at national gatherings in Mewat and Dr. Ashraf's association with national struggles

Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi had started to organize Congress committees in Gurgaon after the Alwar movement. Chowdhry Kamal Khan of Ali Meo and I had organized Congress committees in big villages of Mewat. Whenever Dr. Ashraf had time he used to visit our villages. Generally he used to speak on political affairs at Congress workers' meetings and private meetings of the lawyers of Gurgaon.

In the days of the Alwar and Bharatpur P. P. Movements, many people came to love him. The people of Mewat always invited him to any big popular gathering. Dr. Ashraf's advice was sought on all troublesome and complicated problems in Mewat. Besides Dr. Ashraf, Dr. Shaukatullah Ansari of Delhi, Sajaad Zahir, Sahibzada Mahmuduzaffah and his wife Dr. Rashid Jehan, also began to visit Mewat. Syed Mutalabi used to take Sajaad Zahir especially round the central villages of Mewat, unknown to the C. I. D.

IX

A gathering in the village of Bichhur

This is the affair of Ismail and Rasa which will be explained below in detail. Dr. Ashraf was specially invited to a gathering on the occasion of the marriage of Chowdhry Kale Khan's daughter of Bichhur, to which, in addition to the twelve great *pals* and 52 *got* and the thirteenth Pahat *pal* or Palakara, thousands of people of the Mahendwar *pal* of Jats came. Another big gathering attended by Dr. Ashraf was when chowdhries deputed from the Rawat *pal* of Jats and the Chhirklot *pal* of Meos met to settle a dispute between Kot and Bahin villages which had led to bloodshed. The purpose of Dr. Ashraf's attendance at these meetings was to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity and to instil a new spirit for the establishment of a better government by setting the aim of national progress in place of the present government. He strengthened his political connections with educated youth by participating in these gatherings. He showed the honest chowdhries the correct path to political awakening and created hatred of the capitalist mentality which he regarded as responsible for the misery of the country. He was happy to see the demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity at these mixed

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gatherings. He also witnessed a gathering at night on the occasion of the marriage of Subhani, the daughter of Chowdhri Kale Khan of Bichhur, when Hindu Jats and wine-drinking Meo chowdhries sat together and drank. They gave money to the bards *(mirasi)* who sang of the bravery of every chowdhry's ancestors and so excited the drunken chowdhries' enthusiasm that they collected large presents from them.

After seeing this Hindu-Muslim unity among the people of Mewat he once exclaimed enthusiastically: "Only Dr. Ashraf has the privilege of seeing these genuine demonstrations of Hindu-Muslim unity. The other political leaders of India have not had that honour." At these gatherings he inspired many people to become political workers. It was difficult for any young man to meet Dr. Ashraf without becoming a patriot and a student of Marxism.

The defeat of communalism in Jatiyat and Mewat

Dr. Ashraf und Syed Mutalabi came to Mewat to attend a big panchayat of the chowdhries of Rawat *pal* and Chhirklot *pal*. The story is as follows. There had been a minor incident of theft which had excited attention and matters went so far that the chowdhries of two central villages, Kot and Bahin, of the Meo Chhirklot *pal* and the Rawat *pal* of Jats, sent messengers to each other and appointed a time for battle. At the appointed time some 20 or 25 thousand men on either side assembled. This battle lasted for three days and in the end, when there was fierce fighting one day and corpses lay on both sides, a large party of police arrived and the people dispersed. So long as the fighting had been going on the police captain of Gurgaon had stood aside and looked on. He could think of no way to control such a large crowd of infuriated people. After the battle the police tried to take possession of the dead bodies but in vain. As they left the battlefield, both parties took away the wounded and dead. Both sides buried the Muslims or burned the Hindus secretly. They respected one another's religious traditions. There were Hindus and Muslims in both parties of fighters.

The police arrested a hundred responsible leaders from both sides but when they met in the police station they quickly settled the matter between themselves. After they were released on bail, a great panchayat was called to arrange the final settlement. Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi were specially invited to attend. Dr. Ashraf was pleased when he heard the speeches of the chowdhries of the two *pals*. The point of the decision was to see that the police case failed for lack of evidence of the battle. This demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity and of the ancient panchayat institution strengthened his idea that his dream of a Pal Province comprising Mewat and adjacent areas might be realized.

Dr. Ashraf wished to see a united India based on such regional units.

In this local battle the communalist Hindus and pro-government Meo *Zeldars* did their best to assist the police to seize the dead and the wounded. People with evil minds, like the Jan Sangh-ites and Mahasabha-ites in the towns, tried to make out that this was a Hindu-Muslim riot. They incited Hindus against Meos but without success. The police and the communalists suffered a great defeat in

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this battle thanks to the *pal* system of Mewat and Jatiyat. Syed Mutalabi wrote a booklet on the victory of the people and the defeat of the communalists which became very popular.

Dr. Ashraf is concerned in a feud between two Meo Pals

The people of Mewat preserve tribal custom. Every now and then quarrels arise. A small quarrel spreads through a large area; suddenly a large number of people find themselves involved in a feud. The government fails to restore peace and their attempt to do so often brings about a collision between the police and the parties to the dispute. Such is the story of Chowdhry Mohammad Ismail Khan of Khandeola in Bharatpur state and Musamat (Lady) Nawazi of Rasa. The affair between Chowdhry Ismail and Lady Nawazi is memorable.

Immediately after the Alwar and Bharatpur movements, the love between Nawazi and Ismail and their living together as man and wife contrary to the customs of the brotherhood, became an inter-state quarrel between Alwar and Bharatpur. The Meos of Gurgaon also became involved because of the *pal* system. This was before the Independence of India at a time when the Congress movement was growing and Alwar and Bharatpur had recently witnessed an armed revolt of the Meos. Both governments feared the rebellious spirit of the Meos. They would not miss any chance of suppressing them. They seized their opportunity and after mutual consultation decided that each should support the party belonging to its own state and thus destroy the Meos by making them fight each other. By making Meos fight Meos they hoped to break their power and keep mutual hatred alive for a long time to come.

The Maharaja of Bharatpur supported the party of Ismail and the English prime minister of Alwar was the champion of Nawazi's village in Alwar state.

An abduction case was filed at law against Ismail in order to deceive the world, while his supporters in Alwar and the state of Bharatpur took steps that the warrant of arrest should not be put into effect. But behind the scenes both governments left the disputants free to do what they liked. When quarrels of this kind arise over women the Meo's aim is to seize ten women of the opposing side for every woman of his own clan. On such occasions the lives of men and the honour of women are sacrificed to madness and barbarity. Some intelligent people in Mewat quickly grasped the situation and elected a panchayat of chowdhries to prevent an internal feud. Chowdhry Ismail was the leader for his own party, which was the Demrot *pal*, but it would have been damaging for him to have taken any important step without consulting Chowdhry Azmat Khan, Zeldar of Mandalka village in Bharatpur, and Chowdhry Kamal Khan of Ali Meo, in Gurgaon district. He also had to respect the advice of Chowdhry Kale Khan of Bichhur, since he was a kinsman of Azmat Khan and Chowdhry of Chhirklot *pal*.

The other party opposing Chowdhry Ismail or the Demrot *pal*, was that of Nawazi, namely Ghoria *pal*, which comprises two hundred and ten villages, led by Chowdhry Dilawar Khan of Sidhrawat in Gurgaon District, an important man whose decision was the final decision of the whole people of the *pal*. With the

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Gurgaon chowdhries involved, the matter became the affair of the entire population of Mewat. In such cases the Meos had no hesitation in taking the administration of civil and Islamic law into their own hands.

The panchayat of elected chowdhries came to the conclusion that the important persons who were contesting as accuser and accused would only abandon their animosity on Dr. Ashraf's advice and that a decisive judgement from Dr. Ashraf alone could bring about reconciliation in this dispute. Dr. Ashraf was the only one who could defeat the manoeuvres of the two governments of Alwar and Bharatpur.

It was decided that Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi, who was a respected figure in Mewat, should bring Dr. Ashraf here as soon as possible and be responsible for seeing that he met both sides. The panchayat called to settle this quarrel further decided that the woman should be immediately handed over to Dr. Ashraf in order to avoid two dangers. In the event of a panchayat decision the woman might be handed over to the successful party. If the case could not be withdrawn from the court the woman could not be handed over to either party without a court decision. Hence two dangers could arise. (1) The woman could not be given shelter in Mewat without risk of a full-scale battle. (2) While opinion was divided there was the danger of collision with the police, should the C. I. D. succeed in getting the woman taken into custody.

Dr. Ashraf was then at the All India Congress Committee office at Allahabad. Syed Mutalabi called on him at once and arranged a meeting between Dr. Ashraf and the leaders of both parties. Syed Sahib persuaded both sides to agree that they would abide by Dr. Ashraf's decision and explained to them that this was the conclusion arrived at by certain chowdhries of Mewat who wished to maintain peace in Mewat and to find a solution for their dispute.

After mutual consultation Dr. Ashraf decided that: (1) The disputants should avoid armed conflict and forcible seizure of one another's women; (2) The verdict should be left to the court. Both parties were to accept the verdict of the court according to law and to the will of the woman. An attempt would be made to withdraw the case and then the parties should accept the panchayat's decision guided by Dr. Ashraf's advice. (3) Chowdhry Ismail should immediately hand the woman over to Dr. Ashraf.

Chowdhry Ismail agreed to confide the woman to Dr. Ashraf's care – a thing unheard of before, only possible because Dr. Ashraf's character was that of a man to be trusted. Chowdhry Ismail therefore took the woman himself to Allahabad according to plan.

The panchayat's efforts to get the case withdrawn were unsuccessful.

Perhaps the politicians of the world will be surprised that Dr. Ashraf should have interested himself in an abduction case and sheltered a person wanted by the court and whose description had been advertised in the press. How could Dr. Ashraf, a learned man, philosopher, historian, political leader and revolutionary communist, risk a feud over a case of moral conduct? He took this dangerous step in order to save the honour of thousands of women and to save many innocent people from barbarous fratricidal murder and destruction. He thwarted the

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attempts of both governments to crush the people of Alwar and Bharatpur and to sow mutual hatred among them. His participation in this dangerous business deepened the confidence of the Meo nation in him and his position as their benefactor was further strengthened.

In accordance with Dr. Ashraf's advice the disputants abandoned their hostility. The court, taking the woman's wishes into consideration, allowed her to stay with Ismail, and so peace was restored in Mewat. His rôle in preventing civil war showed that Dr. Ashraf was not merely a leader who made speeches on the platform or a professor who taught college students. He had the capacity to solve dangerous problems of the people at a risk to himself, to organize the people to face such dangers, and that he himself was able to face danger.

X

Dr. Ashraf's tour of Mewat and his association with the Meo people

When Dr. Ashraf was tired of the busy life of the city or planned a holiday, he often came to refresh himself in Mewat. He once made an excursion to Mewat by bullock cart with his wife and children. Every village in Mewat was his own village. Making new friends was his weakness. He had countless friends in Mewat and that is why every village was his village. In the villages he adopted country ways. He drank milk and buttermilk, ate salt, butter and bread, and this was not put on for show. He could deliver a lecture and give advice at length on any subject. A cow should be cared for in this way; it should get better fodder, in that way. It does not pay a farmer to keep a cow that gives little milk: that means a lot of labour for small returns. A cow of good stock should be got somehow. He spoke of how cattle were looked after in socialist Russia. His reason for drinking buttermilk was to induce the peasants to make some effort to improve, and when we objected to his long lectures he would explain to us that a peasant speaks from his heart and takes advice only when he feels that the speaker is his own man. No one could tell whether he would ever meet this peasant again but the peasant would always remember the advice. The peasant looks on every white collar man as a superior and intelligent person, but at the same time as his rival and enemy. If one drinks his buttermilk he thinks that after all he is a man like himself and takes all his advice to be true and weighty. On his expeditions to Mewat, he did all he could to encourage his hosts to take active part in political activities. Whenever he came to a village he attached great importance to meeting the schoolmaster and the children of the village school. Whenever he was a guest in a village he would point out its shortcomings to his hosts in such a way that they would be removed after his departure. He tried to convince every peasant that it was his birthright to use a teaset, tables and chairs, beds and bedding, and the other necessities of life common in towns. Dr. Ashraf was an adept in winning the youth for his disciples. He would ask them to tell the youth of Mewat to look to the young people of Russia and China for their

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example, and advised them to get books, newspapers and magazines on these subjects. He used to give them names and addresses. He made a point of encouraging every educated person to collect the verses of Mewat poets and to record the lives of the sufis of Mewat.

As regards sports he advised people to keep up the traditions of the masters of wrestling[4] and cudgel play. He attended matches and wanted to improve team organization.

XI

The beginning of Hindu-Muslim riots in Mewat

Before the Independence of India, 15 August 1947, a provisional government had already been formed. Hindu-Muslim riots had started in some parts of India but perfect peace reigned for hundreds of miles around Delhi. There was a poor Muslim minority living in Hodal among a large population of Hindu Jats, Brahmins, moneylenders etc. Suddenly the Hindus of Hodal and the surrounding neighbourhood, armed with sticks, spears and axes, attacked the Muslim minority. A number of young people, old people, women and children were burnt alive. Some people from the adjacent Meo villages who had come to make purchases were also assaulted. Six Meo women on their way through Hodal to attend a marriage, were abducted by the British. The local police merely looked on. When the storm of the rioters had subsided and the crowd thinned, the police filed a case on behalf of the victims according to the law and after a time made a few arrests at random. It was thought that by these measures peace had been re-established and that those who had been beaten and killed would receive justice.

The truth of the matter was the exact reverse. This was the beginning of the disturbances spread by the communalists. The attack made by thousands of armed Hindus on a handful of peaceful, unarmed Muslims had been organized to provoke the Muslims of Mewat. The Meos, however, had never learnt to fight on the basis of Hindu against Muslim. The Meos of Mewat were accustomed to fight as Muslim against Muslim or as one *pal* against another; there was no religious factor in the *pals*, nor were the grounds of conflict ever religious. The cause always lay in some daily-life affair, such as land or women or the boundary of a field, or at most in some change of a village boundary or in the existing *pal* structure. When need arose the Hindus and Muslims of one *pal* fought the Hindus and Muslims of

[4] Wrestling is an old tradition with special significance in Meo tribal life and custom. Champions returning from successful matches first offer prayers and flags to a particular village deity, which might suggest pre-Islamic cult associations. Wrestling plays a part in custom, ceremony and legend connected with the social order and the foundation of the village, and wrestlers exhibit their skill on a platform dedicated to the five cult heroes who are now associated with Islamic tradition. [P. M. A.]

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another *pal* and fought whole-heartedly. People are injured and even killed. After a time a panchayat is held and an agreement is reached. No government is asked to decide in these quarrels. The unarmed Muslims of Hodal were cookshop keepers, artisans, goldsmiths, *tonga* drivers, dyers who dyed the garments of the very Hindus, banglemakers who made their bangles – people who had no connection with the Meos. The Meos of Mewat regard these Muslims merely as servants to supply the needs of the people. The village of Hodal with its neighbouring villages was allied to Chhirklot *pal*. The bloodshed at Hodal was regarded as a mean attack in Mewat and no notice was taken of it, since it was reckoned to be a domestic affair of the people of Hodal. The aggressors had made a false calculation. A letter complaining about the injured Meos was written and a demand made for the return of the six abducted women who were sent back after a few days.

A few days later, when the Hodal riot did not produce the results hoped for by the communalists, there appeared newspaper reports that the Muslim Leaguers of Mewat were getting ready to attack Hindu villages. A propaganda campaign against Dr. Ashraf was set afoot alleging that he was mobilizing an army of 10,000 Muslims in Mewat. Following that a rumour was spread in Hindu villages that Dr. Ashraf had proclaimed himself king in Mewat. The latest sensation was that Dr. Ashraf, with the aid of the Meos, was preparing to create a small Pakistan inside India. Many good people believed this slander: Muslim Congressmen in particular took Dr. Ashraf to task about the creation of a small Pakistan. Some older people believed that the atheist Ashraf really had committed this wrong. Nobody tried to get to the root of the matter, just as nobody tried to find out the reasons for the Hodal massacre, and no one knew whether justice had been done in this case or not.

The fact is that in the light of the Karachi resolution, people began formulating schemes for new provinces in free India each according to his own opinion. It is also a fact that after Independence the British provinces were changed and some new provinces created. Similarly after 1942 Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi came out with their idea of a province embracing Mewat and adjoining areas, based on the brotherhoods organized on the *pal* system. Syed Mutalabi wrote an appeal in the form of a pamphlet which was published and distributed under my name. How the Pal Province was to be realized is discussed in the following chapter.

XII

The Pal Province and the charges against Dr. Ashraf of founding a small Pakistan or Meostan in Mewat

Dr. Ashraf, as an historian, knew a great deal about the past of the Meo nation and its great men. As special adviser to the Maharaja of Alwar he had observed the actual life of Mewatis in 1929. In every historical period the Meos are to be found in revolt against the government of the day. As a result of these endless struggles that

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the Meos conducted, they were never able to lead a life of peace and prosperity. Dr. Ashraf was a witness to the struggle in Alwar. But by modern standards the demands were almost negligible when one compares them with the fighting and the sacrifice. In a revolutionary phase like that the revolutionaries who have made such great sacrifices form a free government; but the Alwar movement ended merely in revenue and tax reductions and the establishment of Islamic schools, whose pupils when they leave school cannot fit anywhere into the life of the modern world. They were satisfied with demanding the Maharaja's expulsion. To demand the removal of the Maharaja after a life-and-death battle against the armed forces of the Maharaja was a very modest demand. Although the armed revolt was the talk of the day throughout India and amazed everybody, nobody at that time accused Dr. Ashraf of setting up a Meostan, because there was then no trend to separatism. While in other provinces of India the organization necessary to establish free democratic government was lacking, in Mewat, which had a fighting record from the very beginning, it already existed. In view of these conditions, Dr. Ashraf wanted a local provincial government to be set up in Mewat, as in other provinces, which would form a unit within independent India. Although everyone in India was opposed to the provincial boundaries established by the British, the Indian leaders for the most part were drafting schemes for new provinces with a view to forming their own ministries in them, and it was because of this weakness that these movements could make no progress.

Dr. Ashraf wanted this region of new and vigorous local democratic groups, that is, the *palbandi* system which was a living demonstration of India's old panchayat tradition, to be made a provincial government. Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi were suspicious of those who, whether Hindus or Muslims, talked of forming a province according to their own ideas. At the Maharaja's court of Alwar, Dr. Ashraf had seen practical proof that the ruling class did not feel for the sufferings of the ruled, but only knew how to make them serve. The Maharaja plundered the whole income of all Hindu and Muslim peasants in the form of revenue and various other taxes but was not willing to undertake anything practical to abolish their hunger or to do something for health, education and a better living standard. Dr. Ashraf had seen for himself the servants of the Court of Alwar dying of starvation in return for their ceaseless toil and servitude. The state did nothing for the naked, hungry, illiterate and sick peasant who had accepted an increase in revenue and taxes in order that the Maharaja might keep up a high standard of life, spend money on his personal show and flatter the British. The raja and his ruling class regarded every virgin in the state as their slave for the satisfaction of their lusts. In order that the people may defend their income, increase production by means of modern scientific progress, and achieve a better living standard, the reins of state and provincial government must be in the hands of their elected representatives. To leave the control in the hands of rajas, maharajas and wealthy nobility meant suicide for the people; but whether it were in Alwar and Bharatpur or the provinces of Panjab or the U.P., in existing conditions, to take over the government from the present ruling class was only possible through the unity of the poor and

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labouring people. The Maharaja of Alwar ruled over the greater part of Mewat. He was a distinguished member of the Indian Chamber of Princes, but in his state there was such gross inequality that Dr. Ashraf, whom the Maharaja included in the ruling class by appointing him his special adviser and whom he wished to make his Prime Minister, could not tolerate these injustices, and when he saw no hope of any betterment, he one day pretended to be ill and left the state. The nobility lives by sucking the blood of the peasants. The peasants and the people were in no way thought worthy of any share in the government of the states of Alwar and Bharatpur or in the provinces artificially created by the British government. In view of these conditions, following the Karachi resolution, Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi thought of establishing a *pal* province comprising Mewat and adjoining areas.

There was brotherhood and human unity to be found among the people living in this region. In Mewat and the adjoining areas they speak Kariboli; they have one culture and similar historical traditions; a harmonious likeness runs through their whole society. Here there is an old tradition of a political formation in the *palbandi* system among both Hindus and Muslims. At times this was strengthened in the revolts against the barbarities of the Muslim kings and in times of chaos it helped to check disturbances and to preserve peace among the nations. Before Independence, Dr. Ashraf, in the firm hope or rather belief in Independence, put the idea of organizing and setting up a *pal* province before the people. It was decided to call it Pal Pradesh. Under the *pal* system, the leadership is always in the hands of popular leaders, irrespective of their wealth or poverty. Under the *pal* system rich and poor, Hindus and Muslims, have equal status. The nobility occupies no special or prominent position. Under the *pal* system there is no place for communalism. The *pal* system is the negation of the inhuman inequalities among men.

New provinces have been formed in India since Independence on the basis of these very principles and when Dr. Ashraf put forward the idea of a new province there was nothing unnatural in the proposal.

Many people commented on the draft of the pamphlet on the *pal* province and many of them are today in power with the Congress. In any case all the right-wing politicians considered the establishment of Pal Province a perfectly sound and clear proposal acceptable in the light of the Karachi resolution.

In addition to the Mewat areas of Alwar, Bharatpur and Gurgaon, it was proposed to include the entire state of Alwar and the state of Bharatpur, the whole of Gurgaon district, Agra and Meerut divisions, and the province of Delhi, excluding Delhi city.

Both Hindus and Muslims would have agreed to the establishment of Pal Province, but the fact remains that either the idea was premature or the attack of communalism too strong. The Independence of India changed the country in such a way that many sound branches were lopped off for the sake of the tree's growth and height. This was a time when the partition of India was being hotly debated and any good suggestion coming from a Muslim leader was regarded as dangerous. In the Meo province as it was envisaged Muslims would not have been in the

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majority, but in fact the Meo nation would have been a strong unit among the various components on which the new province was to have been based. The proposal made before Independence to abolish the states of Alwar and Bharatpur and combine them in a province was something new. Among all the proposals for the formation of new provinces, the authors of Pal Province were in fact the first to suggest the abolition of the princely states. They could never have imagined possible the manner in which the princely states were abolished after Independence and that a burden even heavier than the old expenses of the princes would be placed upon the people. Following the publication of the appeal for a Pal Province, meetings were called in various places to win the support of all the prominent men. The first panchayat in this connection was called at Naugaon, in Firozepur Jhirka tehsil in Gurgaon district. It was presided over by Dr. Ashraf himself. Besides the great chowdhries of the Mewat *pals* of Meos and Jats, prominent persons from Mathura, Alwar and Bharatpur also participated. But the British government being greatly afraid at the very idea of a *pal* province, implemented Section 144 in order to make it impossible to hold the panchayat. Instead, the panchayat met in the village of Teengaon, on the boundary between Naugaon and Bharatpur, just on the other side of a field boundary, the site being chosen so that the meeting was actually in Bharatpur state. Thus the underhand manoeuvre of the Panjab government was foiled.

A few days after the panchayat, the fire of Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in India. In Bharatpur the struggle for popular government had already started, and, as it happened, many who supported this movement also supported the proposal of Pal Province. These were the active workers in the movement for popular government. The partition of India, the establishment of Pakistan, the abolition of the princely states, the demand for popular governments, Pal Province and the Hindu-Muslim riots all came together. Communalism grew, the intervention of the princely states threw oil on the flames, and the idea of Pal Province was burnt to ashes in the fire of communalism. In order to discredit Dr. Ashraf he was called a second Jinnah, the author of a little Pakistan in India, and so on – accusations from start to finish without any foundation. While the Meo nation, which was labelled communal, proved to be the best example of Hindu-Muslim unity after the riots. The Unionist Jats of the Panjab were opposed to Pal Province. They wanted to establish a Jat province in common with the other Jat areas of Northern India. Communalists in the Congress party and especially the gentlemen of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, took an active part in slandering Dr. Ashraf. One of the reasons for their opposition was that they regarded the Meos as properly their own religious followers and Mewat as their base, and on account of this misunderstanding of the matter they considered that the foundation of Pal Province was contrary to their interests. In Pal Province they saw a danger to Islam and the spectre of communism haunted them. The movement for popular government in Bharatpur set both the maharajas of Alwar and Bharatpur against Pal Province. In short, all the above mentioned opponents between them turned the proposal of Pal Province into an empty dream. The Hindu-Muslim riots broke the Hindu-Muslim unity that had so

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long endured in the form of the *pals*. The circles above mentioned began to mislead the Hindus under cover of the slogan of Pal Province, and incited Meo brothers to fight Jat brothers. Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi's realistic concept of the province was thus stifled, but since then new provinces have been formed in India on the very same principle.

XIII

Dr. Ashraf's prophesy that there is no place for communal riots in Bharatpur Mewat

The Muslim National Guard's guard of honour on the arrival of Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan

Impressed by the Hindu-Muslim unity among the Meo nation and by the democratic basis of the *pal* system, Dr. Ashraf dreamed of a model province of united Hindus and Muslims in Northern India. Pal Province embodied this dream. Even when the Hindus and Muslims of India were swept into the torrent of communal riots, no one could imagine that Mewat would also become a centre of such riots and that communalists and reactionaries would put the blame on Dr. Ashraf. Dr. Ashraf realized the danger when in 1946 Liaqat Ali Khan passed through Bharatpur on his way from Delhi to Bombay and the Muslim National Guard welcomed him with a guard of honour at the station. The news appeared in the Indian press and Dr. Ashraf began to regard the Muslim League as a danger. Even before 1946 the Meos were divided into two parties. The Meo chowdhries who found that they could not get their own way because of the victory of Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan M. L. A. in the Unionist Party, set up a regular Muslim League regardless of consequences, for the sole purpose of opposing Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan. Ideologically the Meos of Gurgaon had nothing in common with the separatism of the Muslim League.

XIV

The foundation of the Muslim League in Bharatpur thanks to the Maharaja and the background of the Hindu-Muslim riots

The storm of mutual antagonism between Congress and the Muslim League which broke out before the Hindu-Muslim riots, left not a single cottage unaffected. The Hindu-Muslim riots came as the result. The antagonism between Congress and the League was not political in origin. The two groups fought one another in order to gain influence in the country allegedly on behalf of Hindus and Muslims. In this contest the Muslims did not want to share the control of public affairs with the

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Hindus. They looked forward to having their own sphere of influence after the departure of the British and gave it the name of Pakistan. The Indian princes were concerned with retaining their own sovereignty after the departure of the British. Following the policy of divide and rule with the aim of making their own position secure, whenever a political leader or party demanded a share in government, they set up either a Congress or a Muslim League as the case might be to counteract them. The Muslim League in Bharatpur was not founded at Jinnah's suggestion but on the initiative of the Maharaja of Bharatpur, and the policy of the Maharaja in this matter concretised the notion of communal riots for Mewat. The existence of the Muslim League and its separatist policy had become a danger to India before Independence. The so-called Muslim League of Gurgaon Mewat, formed on account of factionalism, was in our hands, but the Muslim League of Bharatpur was outside our control, since there was no Meo population of any importance in Bharatpur city and its suburbs, and what there was had no connection with the Bharatpur Muslims. Political influence here came either from Congress or communal Hindus of Agra and Mathura. There was no prominent Muslim political leader in Bharatpur. Dr. Ashraf saw the foundation of the Muslim League here as a danger, and as soon as he read the news of it, he called Syed Mutalabi from Faridabad to Delhi, discussed the new Muslim League with him, and sent him to Bharatpur to investigate and prepare a report.

The gist of the report given by Syed Mutalabi on his return from Bharatpur was as follows.

Before Independence the Congress had been spreading in the princely states in the form of Praja Mandals or Praja Parishads, shortly after the Alwar movement. Just as in the case of the most popular patriotic movement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah, in support of which Pandit Nehru had gone to Kashmir in defiance of restrictions and had been arrested, similarly in Bharatpur, Congress had started a movement in 1934 under the name of Praja Parishad which resulted in the Maharaja of Bharatpur setting up an Assembly on a democratic basis. As the Independence of India drew nearer, the desire for freedom grew in the princely states as well. The government of India had advised the princes to establish Assemblies. Due to these events Congress activities started up afresh in Bharatpur state. By this time the Muslim League had arisen everywhere, even in the remotest places in India, to oppose Congress. The Muslim League was a godsend for opportunists as an effective weapon against the Congress. They were clever fellows who explained the meaning of Pakistan and the League to the people to suit the need of the moment. The Maharaja (of Bharatpur) founded the Muslim League at his own expense to stem the rising tide of Congress. It was on his advice and at state expense that Said Mohsin Reza, a retired officer like Chowdhry Hukum Singh, set up the Muslim League. This was the League whose volunteers provided the guard of honour for Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan. It had no connection with the Muslim League of Mewat or any other region. There happened to be some Meo *Zeldars* who were very devoted to the Maharaja and they too joined the Muslim League under his patronage.

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XV

Dr. Ashraf's opinions on preserving Mewat from communal riots

The demand for popular government

After Syed Mutalabi's report, it was decided that if Mewat were to be saved from communalism, the Meos must be kept away from the Bharatpur Muslim League, that the Bharatpur Congress movement must be strengthened and the demand for popular government advanced. It was decided that I should go and live in Bharatpur and undertake this patriotic task. Dr. Ashraf considered that it was a matter of life and death to the Meo nation and that every sacrifice had to be made in order to go and carry out this work at Bharatpur.

When I reached Bharatpur, the influence of the communalists was at its height and the Maharaja slept in peace. The first reaction to the politics of the Muslim League gave the opportunity to communalists to form a rival organization. The Maharaja had supposedly formed the Muslim League to counteract Congress. On the contrary, the Hindu Mahasabha, the R.S.S. and other communal organizations were the reply to the Muslim League, and this was what Dr. Ashraf had feared. After the formation of the Muslim National Guard at Bharatpur, the R. S. S. began to organize its own volunteers. Muslims feared to enter Hindu neighbourhoods and Hindus were afraid to visit Muslim areas after dark. Too late the Meo chowdhries realized that if communalists gained the upper hand in India and Meo Muslims came to be indentified with the Muslim League Muslims, the Hindu members of their *pals* could be excused if they made common cause with the Hindu communalists, and it would follow that the old ties of blood and political association with the Hindus would be broken; then the Meos would be only a minority, conscious of their inferiority. Not only was there the Maharaja's Muslim League, but Syed Mutalabi also reported that at a big meeting of the League Chowdhry Mohamad Ismail Khan of Mewat, who has been mentioned above as a friend of Dr. Ashraf, and other Meo *zeldars* had appeared with drawn swords. The Maharaja wanted this meeting to demonstrate the armed strength of the Muslim League in order to suppress that of the Congress. Our Congress patriots, Master Adit Inder, Mr. Rajbhadur, Pandit Sanwal Ram, Pandit Jugal Kishore and others, were in fact discouraged by this Muslim League demonstration. Besides the fact of the Meos joining the Muslim League and being cut off from Congress politics, Bharatpur was also the centre of Chowdhry Choturam Jat. Bharatpur was the centre of the Jat chowdhries and it was here that they were being taught the politics of a Jat province. The advocates of the Jat province were opposed to Congress and communalism was therefore growing. The most prominent of the Bharatpur Congress patriots was Master Adit Inder. He had known me since the days of the old Praja Parishad Movement. He used to be invited to attend the meetings of the All India Meo Panchayat. Master Adit Inder was an

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admirer of Dr. Ashraf and they had been friendly in the days when Dr. Ashraf had his headquarters at Agra. After a little discussion he was in favour of Dr. Ashraf's proposal and took on himself the responsibility of putting through the demand for popular government in the Congress. In order to preserve the unity of the Muslims, the so-called Muslim League was to remain, but the solid strength of the Muslims had to be organized in the Congress and the Kisan Sabha. We all agreed to this.

The story of the campaign for popular government in Bharatpur is a long one. Briefly, however, Dr. Ashraf had to attend many political workers' meetings and conferences. Two Meo chowdhries, Shafad Ahmad and Ismail Khan, under the personal influence of Dr. Ashraf and due to their past friendship and associations with him, not only joined the movement immediately but played an important rôle. Shafad Ahmad had become a fellow-traveller of Dr. Ashraf when he was a student in Nuh. Chowdhry Ismail had been his friend ever since the Nawazi abduction case. This old friendship developed into a political friendship. With the participation of these two men in the movement, the Meo masses were easily and quickly drawn in. Another circumstance that induced a number of Jats to join the popular government movement was a third friend and pupil of Dr. Ashraf, Pandit Kishanlal Joshi. Joshi Sahib had been a friend of Dr. Ashraf since the time he had stayed in Agra. When I arrived at Bharatpur and discussed the problem of growing communalism with him and informed him of Dr. Ashraf's opinion, he immediately decided to change his political line. At that time he was a responsible member of the Maharaja's Kisan Sabha. He agreed to turn this Kisan Sabha into a communist party Kisan Sabha. Shafad Ahmad and Kishanlal Joshi were both followers of Dr. Ashraf. Shafad remained in the Muslim League and Joshi recruited all Meos both to the Muslim League and the Kisan Sabha together. Within a few days the aim of popular government in Bharatpur formulated by Dr. Ashraf became the subject for discussion in the Congress, the League and the Kisan Sabha. Both the Congress and the Kisan Sabha were led by politically experienced men. But except for Shafad Ahmad who had been sent into the Muslim League for a purpose, the Muslim League leaders were stupid fellows. The Bharatpur Muslim League was only another name for the Maharaja's agents. They only understood what the Maharaja said. For the sake of the non-Meo Muslims of Bharatpur, we had to invite Muslim leaders from Agra and Mathura to persuade the Muslims to join the popular government movement. A Muslim League conference was held. Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi attended on behalf of the Mewat Muslim League of Gurgaon and Dr. Ashraf was specially invited.

At the meeting of Muslim League political workers, Dr. Ashraf convinced the younger people that every sacrifice had to be made to achieve the rights of Muslims in Bharatpur and that the educated people of the towns must also represent the interests of the illiterate masses of the villages. Although the Muslim League was an organization of the Muslims of India, the Bharatpur Muslim League had to win popular government in the state in unity with the rest of the people. The Bharatpur Muslim League must be kept from following the false path of the Indian Muslim League. After a number of questions had been put and answered, the result was

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that all the young men and political workers agreed with Dr. Ashraf's proposal to make every sacrifice that might be necessary. After that the support of all Muslims for the demand of a popular government was won at a public meeting, and it was decided to work together with all the rest of the people in the state. Thus it came about that the Muslim League founded by the Maharaja to put an end to the Congress, rose to demand political rights for the people in unity with the Congress. Once the Muslim League had adopted the correct policy, we soon succeeded in forming a united front.

After Dr. Ashraf's departure, we had great difficulties to face in the meetings of Congress leaders. The Congress leaders, who were accustomed to measuring the Muslim League with the yardstick of the All India Congress, were greatly perplexed by the cooperation of the Muslim League and became an obstruction to the Bharatpur movement. They could not grasp the difference between the Bharatpur Muslim League and the All India Muslim League. They would not even hear its name mentioned. After lengthy discussion they realized that just as people were now made members of the Assembly without belonging to any organization, so too in the future, as long as there were Muslims in Bharatpur, they would have a right to representation, and therefore there could be no harm in their taking part along with others in the creation of a representative assembly. As a result of these meetings and discussions a united front of all political organizations was formed.

There were reactionary and communalist people in the Congress organization but there were also sober, progressive and honest members. The latter brought home to the people that a popular representative government was in any case better than personal autocracy.

XVI

The United Front Committee

A committee consisting of thirty members made up of ten each from the Congress, the Muslim League and the Kisan Sabha, was formed. Among its leading members were Chowdhry Shafad Ahmad, Kishanlal Joshi, Master Adit Inder, Principal Gopilal, Yadav, Rajbhadur, Lala Vazir Chand and ex-police officer Chowdhry Ali Azhar etc. Chowdhry Abdul Haye was unanimously accepted as their adviser. The activities of the United Front expanded. The Maharaja was presented with a memorandum asking for the establishment of a representative assembly. After due consideration, the Maharaja promised to inform them when he could meet them.

The Committee also had support from the people of Agra, Mathura and the adjoining district of Gurgaon. Chowdhry Mehtab Khan M. L. A. of Singar, leader of the Mewat Muslim League, Chowdhry Kale Khan of Bichhur, Chowdhry of Chhirklot *pal*, and Chowdhry Teju Khan of Hatangaon pledged support for the demand of popular government in Bharatpur in the name of the whole of Mewat.

At a time when communalism was at its height in India and the partition of India was being discussed at every gathering, Dr. Ashraf gave the slogan de-

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manding an elected representative assembly on the basis of adult franchise under the auspices of the Maharaja. This demand suited the circumstances and the United Front was formed to achieve it and presented a memorandum to that end. After some time the Maharaja received a deputation from the United Front but no conclusion was arrived at. Having failed to reach an understanding, it was decided to start a satyagrah against the Maharaja's government. This decision was a danger signal for the Maharaja's government. He consulted his friends and supporters and ministers, and before the date fixed for the satyagrah it was announced that ministers would be chosen from among the existing members of the Assembly and applications for the ministries were invited. It was also announced that the Maharaja intended to reserve the department of law and order for himself. According to regulations a magistrate was appointed as returning officer and the last date for filing applications was announced. The United Front boycotted this scheme of the Maharaja and the public demonstrated on the day fixed for filing applications. Muslim League guards and R.S.S. volunteers, who had thirsted for each other's blood, now united in the Congress and the Muslim League and under the red banner of the Communist Party's Kisan Sabha, lay down together in the courtyard and on the steps of the Maharaja's palace and picketted it. This picketting was a wonderful sight. Only one member of the Assembly, a military *subardar*, had the courage to walk over the volunteers to file his application, but even this poor man turned back halfway. And so the Maharaja's scheme came to nothing. After this failure the Maharaja issued warrants against the popular leaders. Shafad Ahmad Khan, advocate, was the first to be arrested and imprisoned. Because of this the satyagrah could not begin on the date fixed. The arrest of Chowdhry Shafad Khan led to unrest. Panchayats began to meet. The Meos were opposed to the satyagrah. They began agitations for non-payment of revenue and a complete boycott. A diwan, Chowdhry Hukum Singh, informed the Maharaja that the Meos were against the satyagrah and that according to reports given by the C.I.D., unless some speedy decision were taken they would begin a movement for the non-payment of revenue and the abolition of taxes.

The participation of the Meos in the movement along these lines was a serious danger. Later it was learned that consultations had taken place in the Maharaja's palace at Agra with Dr. Ashraf in hope of a settlement. Chowdhry Hukum Singh, the state diwan, and Dr. Ashraf agreed that Dr. Ashraf should talk with members of the United Front and settle the matter. This meeting was to be kept secret. When this news came out, Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi came to Bharatpur again. A meeting of the United Front was called at which it was decided that the Maharaja should first release Shafad Ahmad and that after his release the members of the United Front would come to a decision. Dr. Ashraf, Syed Mutalabi and I met Shafad Ahmad in Bharatpur jail and had a talk with him. Shafad Ahmad was soon after released. A meeting of the United Front was then held at which leaders were chosen to visit the Maharaja. Once again the Maharaja could not agree with these leaders on certain points and negotiations broke down. A few days later the satyagrah movement began, and a few days after it had started a big public demon-

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stration was organized. The Maharaja decided on severe measures and mounted policemen rode down the demonstrators. Many women and children were killed and countless people injured. The movement continued for some time. The Maharaja was obliged to give way to the pressure of the movement and the leaders were once more invited to come to terms.

During this period the hatred between Hindus and Muslims had gone beyond control and the flames of communal riots spread all over the Panjab. Communalists outside the state had established relations with communalists in Bharatpur. Even the Maharaja's younger brother, Batchu Singh, became the leader of the communalists, and had devised a plan of exterminating the Meos and other Muslims of Mewat. The growing strength of the communalists reinforced the Maharaja's chauvinism. The Maharaja decided to send his troops to Mewat. This terrorism and the anti-Muslim policy became notorious. When the United Front leaders met the Maharaja matters were already past remedying. The newspapers were full of reports of the Meos arming in Mewat. Hindu-Muslim riots were taking place in various parts of India. In Alwar the Jan Sangh volunteers had begun military training. In this situation the Congress leaders in the United Front, instead of taking over the government, declared their inability to participate in talks concerning government, and openly said that in the present conditions of turmoil, when Hindu-Muslim riots were taking place all over India and could break out at any moment in the state, when even the younger brother of the Maharaja was the chief of the communalists, they were not prepared to participate in a government or to take any responsibility.

A few days later the satyagrah movement faded out of itself and peace committees began to be set up. It was not long before the satyagrah was replaced by anti-Muslim disturbances. Before these disturbances broke out, the Maharaja himself took the initiative by sending troops to the frontier village of Naugaon in Mewat.

We had called a meeting of some representative Meos at Naugaon to consider the situation. Only a few of us had assembled when Dr. Ashraf arrived. It was decided to pass the night there. Suddenly the Maharaja's troops surrounded Naugaon. The interim government at Delhi was in fact in a state of chaos incomprehensible to the rulers. The ministers of the English Governor-General were divided into Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus were not unanimous among themselves. Sardar Patel was the secret leader of the communalists. The Congress supporters of Jawaharlal Nehru failed to recognize their enemies. The rajas were sending their armies to attack their Muslim subjects while the Central Government at Delhi babbled about democracy. Such were the contradictions that strengthened the forces of communalism, and Hindu-Muslim riots spread all over India.

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XVII

Why the first military attack was directed against Naugaon

Naugaon is the last Meo village in Bharatpur and on the common frontier with the Mewat of U.P. and Gurgaon. The Maharaja attacked Naugaon in the belief that the Meos of Gurgaon would not come to the aid of the Meos of Bharatpur and would be intimidated. Further, the U.P. Jats would support Bharatpur and the satyagrah movement would be crushed. We had informed Dr. Ashraf at Delhi about the recent attack on the United Front and because of the disturbed conditions in Bharatpur, we had called this meeting of Mewat political workers in Bharatpur on the spur of the moment. We were very much perturbed by this sudden encirclement by soldiers. We had taken no defensive precautions and nobody dreamt of a military attack. The intentions of the army were immediately obvious to all. The news of the arrival of the troops quickly spread to the villages round about Naugaon and people began to assemble to meet this critical situation. It was the instinct of self-preservation inherent in the Meo nation. When we came to know of this we heaved a sigh of relief. By midnight positions had been taken up facing the Maharaja's forces on the border of Teengaon, which is in Gurgaon district. Dr. Ashraf showed great acumen on this occasion. The Meo riflemen were the last to expect advice on warfare from an educated man. Soon after dusk the army started to mount their old-fashioned, indigenous cannon in order to bombard the village next day. The attack was to begin the following morning. Dr. Ashraf advised a full-scale onslaught on the military camp before the enemy forces could organize themselves and launch their attack. The camp was to be set on fire. The men of Teengaon were to come in and help after the camp had been fired. It was clear that a sudden attack would produce confusion among the sleeping soldiers and in this chaos the few guards would be insufficient to hold out. One party must first start the fire, another must seize the cannon, and all the rifles they could lay hands on must also be captured. After midnight the young Meos went to attack the Maharaja's camp. The attack was successful although a few Meo youths were killed. The Maharaja's out-of-date cannon was captured. Meanwhile the men of Teengaon also arrived. In less than no time the military camp was abandoned. By mid-day the Maharaja's forces were wiped out. After this incident instead of going on to Mewat, Dr. Ashraf returned to Delhi. A few days later the Hindu communalists led by Batchu Singh began a massacre in Bharatpur.

On reaching Delhi Dr. Ashraf informed the Communist Headquarters about the Hindu-Muslim riots in Mewat. It was now the task of the C. P. to stop the communal riots in Mewat and the surroundings.

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XVIII

Dr. Ashraf's fight against communalism and the publication of "Naya Daur"

The struggle against communalism in India was a permanent feature of Dr. Ashraf's life. With the end of India's slavery, the phase of speech-making closed and a period of mutual contention arose. The C. P., in view of his abilities, entrusted Dr. Ashraf with the task of combatting communalism through a newspaper. The daily "Naya Daur" was a front in the fight against communalism and Dr. Ashraf had full charge of the editorial board. The communal struggle in India – and Mewat is a part of India – will be discussed below.

In Mewat the communal riots spread from Bharatpur and Alwar up to Rewari. The united front of the princely rulers and Hindu communalists was bent on driving the Muslims out of Mewat. Invaders from outside Mewat broke by force the old *palbandi* relations with the local Hindus. Nevertheless the communal struggle in Mewat can only be called a fratricidal war. The Meos of Mewat did their utmost to preserve their old tradition. Dr. Ashraf counselled them: "Do not cross the frontiers and do not be defeated in your own homeland." This proved to be useful advice for the people of Mewat. When the storm of communalism subsided the peace panchayats called in the phase of mutual settlements did not find the Meos guilty. Hence Hindu-Muslim unity was soon restored in Mewat and relations with neighbouring Hindus speedily improved.

The Meos possessed old-fashioned weapons like muzzle-loading muskets and even these were rusty. When they lost confidence in their Hindu neighbours they made the best preparation they could for self-defence. The Meos are a martial people but during the riots of 1947 the government apparatus generally took the part of the Hindu rioters and fought on their side, and the out-of-date guns were useless against 303 rifles.

On the advice of Comrade P. C. Joshi and other Delhi comrades, meetings of responsible party members belonging to the U. P. areas bordering on Mewat were called in Delhi. It was decided to try to stop Hindus from invading Mewat and to contradict rumours which were being spread that the Muslims had attacked first. Thanks to the efforts of these comrades the attack proved less formidable. There were three other factors operating in addition to the communalists which could be checked. First, some congressmen in Gurgaon, Mathura and Bulandshahar had joined the rioters to gain personal influence or on account of their own communalist outlook. Secondly, a great many government servants were themselves in favour of expelling the Meos from India. Thirdly, there was the attitude of the armed forces. This was particularly dangerous. Communal-minded Jat soldiers of Hariana and Sikh troops from the Panjab were themselves anti-Muslim and far from stopping Hindu invaders, actually helped them. The utmost strength of the people is helpless against the combined force of Congress and the civil and military officers of the Government. It can never match itself against such power. The

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Congress High Command was blind in its antagonism to Pakistan and could not see that once strengthened the communalists would prove a menace to the Indian Congress and its leaders.

XIX

Communal riots in Mewat and Gandhiji

Dr. Ashraf proposed bringing the matter to the attention of Gandhiji. P. C. Joshi, the General Secretary of the C. P. I., agreed and came to the conclusion that the Muslims of Mewat could only be saved through Gandhiji's intervention. The support of Hindu communists was not enough to stop riots on this vast scale.

It was proposed that Syed Mutalabi and Abdul Haye should first consult Maulana Azad and proceed according to his advice. We met Maulana Azad, and after hearing what we had to say he fixed an appointment with Gandhiji, informing him that "Syed Mutalabi and Abdul Haye are representatives of the Mewat Muslims and are coming to tell you about the participation of Congress and government agencies in the riots, and to appeal for protection for the Meos." He advised us to make a full report to Gandhiji and to leave the rest to him. When we arrived at Bhandi Colony, Gandhiji was at dinner. He said: "Dinnertime is not *purdah*. As I have no scruple in receiving Maulana when I am eating, I shall not hesitate to receive his friends. Please excuse me; that is why I have called you without waiting." After hearing our report, Gandhiji expressed his sorrow at the participation of Congress leaders and government agencies in the riots. He sent for the Congress leaders of Gurgaon, Mathura and Bulandshahr, telling us to meet him again in two days' time. But owing to our presence, none of the Congressites of these three districts came to discuss the problems of Mewat with Gandhiji. When we arrived at the appointed time Gandhiji said: "Those people have not come to see me because you are here. I am no more a mediator. One of the parties has rejected my mediation. Now I too am a party in the matter. I shall do my best. Such is Maulana's command and my duty." Gandhiji sent some people of his own to confirm our reports about congressmen participating in the riots. He then asked Pandit Nehru to take official responsibility for the defense of Mewat. After Panditji and Sardar Patel had consulted, Madrasi troops were drafted to Mewat and peace was restored. Panchayats of local Hindus and Muslims met and they agreed to a lasting peace. With Independence, India was divided into two parts, India and Pakistan, and it was this partition that was the root cause of the riots. After the restoration of peace in Mewat, the question arose whether to stay in India or to seek a home in Pakistan.

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XX

The popular aims of "Naya Daur" under Dr. Ashraf's editorship

The Hindu-Muslim riots in India were not the result of any spontaneous sentiment but of the long efforts of the British Imperialists to keep the Indian people divided. The Hindu capitalists were made masters over the Hindu masses and the Muslim capitalists were made the leaders of the Muslims. They kept in reserve the feudal classes, the rajas, maharajas, nawabs and the Nizam in Hyderabad, and all of these were completely subservient to their influence at the time of Independence. When Independence came, the Indian capitalists, anxious to maintain their grip over the people, fed them with the poison of communalism till they thirsted for one another's blood. At such a time, when throughout India brother was fighting brother and their ill-wishers were in every respect the more powerful, it was difficult to calm them. "Naya Daur" was started not only to give guidance to the looted, shelterless and injured people whose homes had been burnt, but to save peasants, workers and the educated middle-class from the poison of communalism and from being led astray, to mobilize them against expiring imperialism and against the capitalists and the feudal nobility.

Like a cunning player, the British imperialists helped the communalists openly or secretly whichever suited them best. Actually they were bargaining with the capitalists about transferring the government to them, but after Independence the communalists strove to get hold of the government at all costs. Sardar Patel was the leader of this group. They could not, however, succeed without spreading unrest in India. Certain congressmen also shared Patel's views and a considerable number of government servants in the administration had taken the same false path. The rulers of the princely states were drunk with power and in the name of religion sought to deceive both capitalists and masses in order to ensure their own safety and personal power. They helped the communalists in every way possible and were, through their agents, in the forefront of the riots. They had the false hope that by shedding Muslim blood they could become the leaders of Hindus of all classes in India; that they would be able to make short work of the so-called leaders of democracy, and then take over the government of the country. "Naya Daur" was published to warn congressmen and to expose the enemies of the people to them. The feudalists, on the excuse of massacring Muslims, prepared to march in full military strength on Delhi where the British imperialists were now handing over the administration to Indians. "Naya Daur" came out to expose the slogan of "On to Delhi" put forward by the princes and communalists. This opened Pandit Nehru's eyes and when he realized that disaster threatened, he decided to confront the feudalists of the Panjab, Rajasthan and Gurgaon with military force. A detachment of communalists led by Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh advancing from the direction of Mathura was stopped outside Delhi.

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The weapons which were to be used against Jawaharlal and his fellow-congressmen were being tested on the Muslims of Mewat.

"Naya Daur" was first launched by the united efforts of Dr. Ashraf, Syed Mutalabi, Mewat comrades and Anis Hashmi, together with Delhi communists and other comrades from the Panjab. At first its finances were as bad as those of every newspaper of the workers and the poor. After a time Lala Pratap Singh Garg solved their financial problems. "Naya Daur" was begun under Dr. Ashraf's supervision as editor, but later comrade Tikaram Sukhan and Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi were brought onto the editorial staff. When the Muslims of Ajmeeri Gate were turned out as a result of the riots, the office of the newspaper was moved to the premisses of the All India Meo Panchayat at Akhbar Manzil, Urdu Bazaar, Jama Masjid. The paper's services in counteracting communalism were acknowledged by all peace lovers; all reputable newspapers, as well as leading progressive writers and politicians appreciated it. "Naya Daur" set a high standard. Its sales were organized in all the major cities throughout India as well as in the towns of Northern India. Its distribution in Delhi and its suburbs, and particularly in the Panjab, was organized by the Communist Party.

"Naya Daur" specialized mainly on news that showed up the conspiracies of the communalists and the princely states, for instance, how the Maharaja of Bharatpur distributed arms to Jats in the Hariana region of the Panjab. On the basis of this report the Panjab police carried out raids and captured some weapons; but as no steps were taken against the men behind such crimes, the communalists continued to grow in strength and launched an attack on Dr. Ashraf from all sides.

XXI

The opinion of Dr. Ashraf and P. C. Joshi that the integrity of the Meo nation can only be safeguarded in Mewat

The first communal riots in Northern India began at Garhganga Fair with what was in fact a massacre of Muslims. This is a great Hindu fair, but because there is a bazaar Muslims used to come from far and wide to buy and sell. A number of people from Mewat were among those killed at the fair. As already mentioned, the riots in Mewat began in the town of Hodal, the last town in Gurgaon near the U. P. border. Mewat lies westwards from this point and that is why the massacre of Muslims was staged here in order to provoke the Meos. But as the Muslims killed on this occasion were not Meos, thanks to the *pal* brotherhood which was regarded as a stronger obligation than any towards other, non-Meo, Muslims, the Meos treated it as a local feud and took no notice. According to the Meos' national tradition, the common people of Hodal were fellow-subjects, and they regarded the whole affair as a cruelty perpetrated against the people by their rulers. But when the Maharaja of Bharatpur invaded Naugaon and started the riots there, the flames began to spread in all directions. A second front of riots was opened by the leaders of Gurgaon and Rewari. Certain leading chowdhries of Mewat were under the false

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impression that the Hindu-Muslim riots were merely local feuds as in the old days, when on the basis of the *pal* system the Hindus and Muslims of one *pal* fought the Hindus and Muslims of another, and that they were nothing out of the ordinary. Dr. Ashraf held that these fights were defensive struggles on the part of the Meos to ward off attack. Sometimes these battles of self-defense turned into dangerous warfare and it was necessary to pursue the enemy and destroy his base. The people were not aware of the consequences of these battles. They sometimes wondered how long the fighting was going to continue. However, the participation of communalist police and military officers was soon detected. As soon as this was clear the Meos tried to come to terms with the invaders, but when the latter did not want a settlement of these unmotivated attacks, there was nothing that the Meos could do about it. When they tried to negotiate, the local people were afraid that the local officials and the Hindus from outside would call them traitors and protectors of Muslims. In the state of Alwar the adoption of Hinduism was made the condition, but in practice even Hinduism could not save the lives of Meos, and their conversion was said to be hypocrisy and opportunism. The local Harijans and refugees from the Panjab, who hoped to get possession of the Meos' land, had no pity. The Maharaja of Alwar granted some land to Meo chowdhries who adopted Hinduism and converted their villages, but even there Hindu Meos were not safe. The Muslim Meos of Alwar had never been more than nominally Muslim in any case, and in comparison with the Meos in Gurgaon or the neighbourhood of Delhi, they were completely ignorant of Islamic teachings. Mewat is a large area. The Meos are a martial nation. They were armed with old-fashioned weapons. They were experienced in fighting with local enemies. Hence the local Hindus had had experience of fighting Meos and their warlike spirit was common knowledge. For a long time the riots were kept up under the pressure of the government and of outsiders. There had always been fighting in and around Mewat, but the riots of 1947 involved the whole country and were kept up in order to drive the Meos out of Mewat. By now Pakistan was fully established and it was decided that the Muslims of East Panjab should migrate there in exchange for the Hindus of West Panjab. The result of many months of fighting laid waste the Mewat of Alwar and Bharatpur, and all the Meos were collected in the Nuh and Firozepur Jhirka tehsils of Gurgaon. Some of them from Alwar took refuge in the Idgah camp at Delhi. Peace was restored in Mewat on Gandhiji's intervention, but after the establishment of Pakistan and the decision on migration, who was to decide for the Meos whether they should go to Pakistan or re-settle in the homes from which they had been uprooted in Alwar and Bharatpur? This was a completely new problem and there was no leadership in Mewat that could give an answer. Moreover, two opinions had arisen among the Muslims of Mewat. The non-Meo Muslims of Mewat were in favour of migrating to Pakistan. These Muslims mostly lived in Hindu towns or in places with a Hindu majority and they were powerless to protect themselves. Those Meos who had joined the Muslim League in opposition to Yasin Khan shared the same opinion. Among non-Meo Muslims, only Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi and Risaldar Omar Farooq of Seoli tehsil, Palwal, in Gurgaon District, were united

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with the Meo brotherhood; their political standing among the people of the region in general and within the Meo brotherhood in particular, was that of Meo chowdhries, and they ranked among the most important members of the Mewat leadership. Whether the Meos ought to go to Pakistan or re-settle in India was a political problem. People were interested in its solution but most of the chowdhries and all the ordinary people felt completely lost. It was centuries since they had given up their ancient nomadism but now they had actually become nomads again. Chowdhry Mohammad Yasin Khan of Rehna, Nuh; Khanbhadur Sardar Mohammad Khan of Bewal; Abdul Haye; Kamal Khan of Ali Meo; Shafad Ali Khan of Mandalka, Bharatpur; and Syed Mutalabi Faridabadi were regarded as political men who had represented the Meos during the riots and in establishing peace, and everybody looked to them to make the decision. In this state of confusion, a camp was opened at the town of Sohna in Gurgaon tehsil for those going to Pakistan. A liaison staff of the Pakistan Government had already arrived and Pakistan troops were also there to escort the emigrants to Pakistan. Whether the Mewat leaders took a decision or not, the governments of India and Pakistan had already agreed that the Muslims of East Panjab were to go to Pakistan. Thus, following the establishment of Pakistan, chaos spread among the people of Mewat. The Meos of Alwar and Bharatpur had some kind of political organizations of their own on a regional basis, but no important matters were ever decided without the Meos of Gurgaon. Whether to go to Pakistan, remain in India or split the Meo nation into two – one part in India and one in Pakistan – was a very serious question indeed. The major problem that arose from a division of the nation was concerned with marriage relations. In the first place Meos did not marry non-Meos and in alliances among Meos themselves the rules of *got* kinship must be observed. Any decision of this kind involved the question of the continuity of the race, and that was why the choice of going to Pakistan or remaining in India could not be settled by a few hotheads. It was necessary to obtain a collective decision of the whole nation. Secondly, Mewat was a region of consolidated Meo population in India, too powerful to be overthrown by any internal or external enemy unless it were the Government. The Government itself had failed first in backing the communal riots and then in proving unable to defend the people from rioters. Hence the Muslims had lost their sense of security in India. But in Pakistan itself there was no guarantee that they would be able to settle in the same place and the Meos had no connection with the Pakistani Muslims either as regards language and culture or from the point of view of race and social custom.

For a Meo there was nothing to choose between a Pakistani Muslim and an Indian Hindu so far as communalism was concerned. All they had in common at most was their title of Muslim. The future of educated Meos, whether in the public services or not, was far from bright in India. The government had dismissed all Meos from service without giving reasons. It was uncertain whether Meo Muslims would be able to live in India or not.

Meos who had little or no connection with religion nevertheless regarded conversion as contrary to their national pride and preferred to retain their religion,

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however nominal it might be, to the indignity of becoming Hindus. Those Meos of Alwar who had become Hindus were hesitating over this common problem in the same way as other Meos. The Hindus had not solved the problem of their future relations by converting Meos to Hinduism. For this reason many fled by night and took refuge in Gurgaon. All the communalist political organizations and most of the administrative apparatus of the government were actually carrying out the evacuation of Meos from India, but in no case did the Meos go willingly to Pakistan. The Panjab government had issued a warrant of arrest against Mohammad Yasin Khan and he had therefore taken refuge in the Communist Party commune at Delhi where Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi were living. Many more arrests were made in order to spread fear in Mewat. But when the people still kept silent on the matter of going to Pakistan, the Maharaja of Alwar's forces attacked the village of Sudhrawat from one side, while the Maharaja of Bharatpur's troops started to make night raids on Dohar from the other direction. Driven by this two-pronged military attack the local Meos, along with refugees from Alwar and Bharatpur, set out for Sohna camp. While this march was taking place, Chowdhry Syed Mohammad Khan and myself tried to get the assistance of military officers in order to bring some representatives of Mewat to meet Chowdhry Yasin Khan at the Delhi office of the C. P. so that a panchayat could be held to come to a final decision. The panchayat afterwards consulted Dr. Ashraf, P. C. Joshi and Syed Mutalabi. Dr. Ashraf and P. C. Joshi, knowing the affairs of the Meo nation and taking into account the behaviour of the Government and the communalists, repeated their former decision to lay the whole matter before Gandhiji and to protest against the shooting and the forced migration to Pakistan. Syed Mutalabi and myself, together with all the Meo chowdhries, called on Gandhiji at Birla House. I had access to Gandhiji at all times to give information regarding communalist conspiracies and attacks on Muslims. As soon as he was told that we were there, Gandhiji received our deputation, and after the introductions he listened with great attention to the Meo chowdhries. They told him briefly, speaking on behalf of a nation 800,000 to 1,000,000 strong, that the Meos were an ancient nation of India and had no social or racial affinity with the Pakistanis. They had always lived and died among the surrounding Hindu nations of India who belonged to the same race. No matter what happened, the Meos had no wish to go to Pakistan. Congress leaders and the Indian Government were driving them from their homes to send them to Pakistan by force. The Meo nation had ended all communalist strife with their neighbours who also wished them to remain. Gandhiji should stop the Government (from pursuing this policy); otherwise the Meos would be obliged to take the law into their own hands. Gandhiji was deeply impressed by this decision of the Meo nation. He promised to help and if necessary to visit Mewat himself. The Meo chowdhries informed Gandhiji of a further decision in the name of the Meo nation to the effect that should the Government not stop the expulsions, in future they would fight the Government regardless of the consequences. Gandhiji was most profoundly impressed by the Meos' determination to die fighting at home, and he said that he would feel prouder to die with such people than to live.

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XXII

The efforts of Dr. Ashraf and the Communist Party to prevent the Meos from going to Pakistan

What with friends and relatives and visitors from Mewat on the one hand, and the newspaper on the other to keep him busy, Dr. Ashraf had little possibility of doing anything for the Mewatis who had gone astray. And what could he have done after all? Not only Meos but all Muslims throughout India were bewildered. The Meo position was very serious – they were caught between the devil and the deep. They had to face the official agents of the Pakistan Government as well as the unofficial self-appointed Muslim leaders, and ceaseless effort was called for. Once or twice Dr. Ashraf visited Mewat himself and came to the conclusion that resettling those who had been uprooted in India was not a matter that one or two individuals could effect. In Sohna camp and throughout Mewat there was an atmosphere of doom and each thought only of himself. Here, when the Day of Judgement comes, all the good deeds that a man may once have done will be outweighed by the single sin of going to Pakistan. The communalists were determined to drive the Meos out of India and to take any decision in the matter was very difficult. Dr. Ashraf's and P. C. Joshi's advice was that we should all plunge into this doomsday chaos and work day and night. There should be no time for rest. First a tour of Mewat by Gandhiji was to be organized to stop people from going to Pakistan. Responsible people should be sent to investigate and make a report on Mewat so that the Government could take a decision to prevent the administration from evacuating the Meos from India. Maulana Hipsur Rahman, head of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, Pandit Jai Narain Viyas and Mr. Brish Bhan were sent to investigate our complaints concerning expulsions. The responsibility of contacting Gandhiji and seeking the necessary help from him and the Indian Government fell to my share, since I already had access to Gandhiji at any time and had earlier been deputed for this task.

Before Gandhiji went to Mewat, he sent Mr. Iyengar, Minister without portfolio, to Sohna Camp to ensure peace and civil rights by order of the Central Government. It was necessary that Chowdhry Yasin Khan should go to Mewat, but to check his influence the police had issued a warrant for his arrest. I obtained a safeconduct warrant for Chowdhry Yasin Khan and Khushi Ahmad of Dhoj from the Government of India so that the police could not arrest them. Just as we had had to seek Gandhiji's support before we could get aid from the Government to stop the riots, so now the problem of resettlement in Mewat could not be solved without Gandhiji's help. In order to convince those who were preparing to leave for Pakistan and to safeguard the rights of the Meos and maintain peace, Gandhiji sent Iyengar to Mewat, while he himself went to Ghasera where he expressed his sympathy with the Meos and appealed to the officials and to the Government

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of India, saying that the Meos were like the backbone of India and that the mistake of sending them to Pakistan should never have been allowed.

Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, Chief Minister of the Panjab, was opposed to the conciliation of the Muslims and to the help given by Gandhiji, but he dared not say anything openly. However he did what he could to make Gandhiji's programme a failure. Chowdhry Yasin Khan complained of this to Gandhiji who rebuked Gopichand at a public meeting.

XXIII

Communalists and anti-Communists attack Dr. Ashraf and he leaves India

Through the columns of "Naya Daur" Dr. Ashraf inflicted such severe blows on communalists and anti-Muslim circles that they writhed and twisted like snakes. The crimes committed against the Muslims by government servants and their attempts to run the administration at the will of the communalists were reported, and the demand was made that the Government should take action against them to forestall danger. On Gandhiji's death sweets were distributed and rejoicing made at Nagina in Mewat, as happened in many other places in India, and this was reported in "Naya Daur". These Nagina communalists, in conspiracy with the Gurgaon police, shamelessly belied the truth, and to revenge themselves they and their police-officer traitors made out a case against Dr. Ashraf to have him arrested. The only possible answer to this dastardly attack was to escape. It is sometimes dangerous and an unnecessary risk of life to seek the protection of the law.

The C. P. decided that Dr. Ashraf and Syed Mutalabi should both go to Pakistan and for some time he lived there underground. Quite a number of our people had already reached Pakistan. Shafad Ahmad was there and Dr. Ashraf stayed with him for a time.

XXIV

Mrs. Ashraf's timely intervention

While Dr. Ashraf was staying with Shafad Ahmad[5] the Pakistan Government arrested him. He fell seriously ill in Karachi Prison and there was little hope that he would survive. Finally Mrs. Ashraf, who was then working at Allahabad University, went to Pakistan to save his life. On arrival in Pakistan she demanded that the Pakistan Government should either release him or bring him to trial in the

[5] Dr. Ashraf was not staying with Shafad Ahmad when he was arrested but with a non-political friend who, in spite of his many unselfish actions, must for obvious reasons go unnamed. [P. M. A.]

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court. The Pakistan Government could not prove any crime for which he could be tried. They had in fact imprisoned Dr. Ashraf on two charges – first for being an Indian and secondly for being a communist, but it would have been ludicrous to try him in court for 'crimes' of that kind. In the end, the Pakistan Government agreed to release Dr. Ashraf on condition that he left Pakistan. The question now was where he could go as a sick man in need of treatment and where there was no danger of his being put in gaol. The Indian Government refused to allow him to go to India, alleging that he was a Pakistani.[6] In the end, on Mrs. Ashraf's advice, he travelled to London as a British subject, where, after many troubles and long nursing, he finally recovered. Even in these circumstances Dr. Ashraf did not cease to think of us in Mewat and often wrote to enquire about our welfare.

XXV

The return from London

After his recovery Dr. Ashraf tried hard to get back to India, but the Indian Government refused to recognize him as an Indian citizen.[7] By chance a backdoor was found. Dr. Ashraf succeeded in obtaining a temporary visa to return to India as a British subject.[8]

Dr. Ashraf had informed me in advance of the date and time of his arrival at Delhi where he stayed for a few days on his return to India. I was already there. He

[6] This was not then the position. Dr. Ashraf had come secretly to Pakistan because there was a warrant out for his arrest in India. The journey to Pakistan was not premeditated. The C. P. I. had meanwhile been illegalized and when the hospital to which he had been admitted at Calcutta was raided by the police, he had just time to get away but was too ill to lead an underground existence. As the two governments obliged one another by handing over "wanted" persons on both sides, it seemed the only thing to do was to go to England before the Pakistan authorities changed their minds and gave him up to the Indian police. Later the facts were distorted by individuals who pretended to be shocked that Dr. Ashraf had "negotiated" or "compromised" with the government. I take this opportunity to affirm that he left Pakistan honourably on his own terms, and that this was probably possible because there were still a few members of the legal profession at Karachi who respected him and had so far retained some old-fashioned respect for elementary justice also. [P. M. A.]

[7] One of the reasons for this refusal which was told to Dr. Ashraf personally at the Indian High Commissioner's Office in London, was that he had allegedly incited a rising in Mewat. Chowdhry Abdul Haye's circumstantial account of Mewat affairs is sufficient answer, but there could be no doubt, particularly from the tone in which this was communicated, that Ashraf's activities in Mewat still rankled in certain quarters. [P. M. A.]

[8] Ashraf travelled to India on a British Home Office identification certificate (such as is issued to any stateless person wishing to leave the country) which was visaed without further question by the Indian authorities. [P. M. A.]

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met as many of the Meo chowdhries as happened to be available in that short time. Dr. Ashraf and his wife were guests of Maulana Hipsur Rahman, Nazim of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema of India, but soon after left for Kashmir.

Maulana Azad loved Dr. Ashraf exceedingly and when Dr. Ashraf said that he meant to remain in India after the expiry of his six-months temporary visa with or without the consent of the Government, Maulana Azad said to him affectionately: "My brother, first pass those six months. The Indian Government dare not cross you in what you want to do." Perhaps Maulana Azad had made the Central Government take some decision regarding Dr. Ashraf's stay while he was still in Kashmir, as after the expiry of the visa no one took any action in the matter at all.

Dr. Ashraf spent about two years in Srinagar. He used to write to me and ask how the people of Mewat were getting on. When he was appointed at Kirori Mal College in Delhi he came and settled permanently there. Due to his poor health he was not able to undertake active political campaigning. His politics became limited to the students and teachers of the University. He did not cease to pay visits to Mewat, however, in spite of medical advice. His Mewat friends used to come to Delhi to see him. Some Meos also came from Pakistan to meet him. Dr. Ashraf himself visited Mewat a few times to attend an Urdu Conference in Shikrawa in Gurgaon District and for sightseeing in Alwar. Mrs. Ashraf was so charmed with Mewat, or, it may be, her special interest in anthropology drew her there, that she wore herself out on her journeys. She visited Alwar, Dig, and other historical places. An account of her Mewat travels is given in another place.

Before leaving for Berlin Dr. and Mrs. Ashraf visited Mewat and met as many people there as possible. The interest that Dr. Ashraf took in Mewat and the Mewatis can plainly be seen from the letters which he wrote to me from Berlin.[9]

XXVI

Dr. Ashraf's warmth and sympathy towards Mewat friends

Dr. Ashraf had countless friends in India. Most of them were his (political) pupils. While he was working at Kirori Mal College it was a common complaint among his friends that Dr. Ashraf no longer met them so often. But the truth of the matter was exactly the contrary. His friends began to be a burden to him. Dr. Ashraf had done much reading and collected a great many notes, but he never wrote anything. We his friends were the real cause. Some others also complained because Phyllis was a European that she did not pay much regard to Dr. Ashraf's Indian friends, that she was less hospitable and more of a miser. At the time when these

[9] These letters have not been included in the present volume for reasons of place. They will be included in a collection of correspondence that it is hoped to publish at some future date. [P. M. A.]

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complaints were made, I had the opportunity to be near to Dr. Ashraf and what I personally saw was that a friend would come, tea was served, after some conversation the visitor left, but no sooner had Dr. Ashraf taken up his pen to write than someone else knocked at the door; and in this way there was a constant stream of callers. Certainly during his years at Delhi we, his friends, gave him no chance to write. This however is by the way. What I wanted to say was that personally Dr. Ashraf was very human. He loved his friends and their families in the way a man loves his own children. Besides giving political guidance he used to help the people of Mewat a great deal in sickness. We villagers are not used to medical treatment. Dr. Ashraf often helped his friends by finding doctors for them. I myself once fell seriously ill at his house. Phyllis had a great deal of trouble in looking after me. She was doctor, nurse and maid servant. Thanks to her practical experience she saved me from the jaws of death. When I felt a little recovered I wanted to go back to the village, but she would not let me go without medical advice as there seemed a danger of relapse. She proved to be correct for the next day I again became ill. Dr. Ashraf himself took me to Irwin Hospital. He pushed my stretcher along like an ordinary worker. He gave no thought to his own trouble. He did everything that the patient's friends or relatives have to do for them in Indian hospitals and that middle class people in India will not do but have done for them by servants. He was his own example in loving others and giving practical proof of it. By nature Dr. Ashraf was a very cultured man, but he could sleep like a poor peasant under a sheet in the middle of a crowd of people, and he could enjoy living like a pauper among his friends.

He helped his friends financially according to his means. He felt for their needs and quietly gave what he could in a way that nobody could refuse to accept. If anyone required a larger sum of money he would make one of his rich friends help. He regarded the sufferings and difficulties of his friends as his own.

XXVII

Dr. Ashraf's influence on Mrs. Ashraf and her interest in Mewat

Dr. Ashraf's associations also led Mrs. Ashraf to take an interest in his country and she carried out an anthropological survey in Mewat. I had no interest in this subject but Phyllis made me her pupil. Besides the survey work she made a sight-seeing tour of Mewat in three or four stages.

On these journeys she seemed to me to be able to put up with the hardships of the road as well as any of the illiterate working folk of the villages. She stayed at a number of villages in Bharatpur, Alwar and Gurgaon. In Alwar state we once trudged about 2 miles on foot to see a temple which had been converted into a mosque and then into a temple again. The traces of all three stages were visible. On our return journey we were overtaken by heavy rain and hail. We were drenched to the skin but Phyllis did not mind. Once we went to see the deserted village

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of Baloj in the hills near Nagina. Our bullock cart was overturned on the rough road and Phyllis was injured. After resting for a day or so she continued her journey.

An Englishwoman, no matter how patient and easy going she may be, is not made for the hardships of the Indian countryside. Our ways of eating, drinking, waking and walking, everything is totally different from the west. I am sorry to say that because of her interest in Mewat and my company she met with endless troubles. There is one incident that I shall always feel sorry about. One night at the beginning of the rainy season we were forced to stop at Lahesa, a village in Bharatpur. In spite of all my efforts no proper arrangements could be made for sleeping or eating. With difficulty I managed to get hold of some maize flour. We had to pass the night in the kind of house called a "bangla" in Mewati which is more doors than wall. In addition to the many human occupants, the owner had brought along his sick camel and tied it up inside the house. Because of the cold they made a fire of cow dung, which gives off more smoke than warmth and the smoke made Phyllis cough all night. She faced discomforts like these out of her love for us and our land and we could not even make good arrangements for her stay.

The desire to do something for the betterment of the people of Mewat – to see how much of that bottomless pit could be filled up and which of our ills might be remedied – was passed on from Dr. Ashraf to Phyllis. It was her great wish to take one of my daughters to be educated at Berlin so that at least one girl might have a better life than she had seen in Mewat. Moved by the hard lot of the women, she wanted to improve the future of at least one Mewati girl. We the people of Mewat value Phyllis for her own qualities, not because she is the wife of Dr. Ashraf. If she found strength to overcome the difficulties of India's climate it was through her love for Mewat. She has also written a book about Mewat which we here not yet had the opportunity to read.

XXVIII

The Meos return from Pakistan

When, thanks to Gandhiji's intervention, conditions were once more created to live in India, about 100,000 Meos came back and reached India by the date allowed for return and are still living here.

The Indian communalists continue to harry the Meos wherever they are strong enough to do so.

Communalists in the administration etc. assume it as their right to loot Meos and suppress their civil liberties. In India as a whole the Meos are treated as step-children.

Educated people do not find employment in the services and justice has not yet been done to former government servants.

Meos are not given posts in the police and army in proportion to the size of their population.

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The best arable lands have not been returned to the Meos.

Their national educational institutions, their *sarais*, *takias*[10] and so on, have not been given back to them.

But in spite of all these restrictions of their primary civil rights, the Meos face facts as they are and continue to dwell in their homeland.

[10] *Takia* – a small building put up a little away from the roadside or in the jungle for rest and meditation or where *faqirs* sit. Sometimes in the form of a room open on one side and sometimes a platform roofed over, they are a feature of the Mewat landscape. They were built as a public charity by Meos for common use. [M. P. A.]

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IV

TRIBUTES AND REMINISCENCES

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The following biographical items are taken from a number of personal reminiscenses, obituaries etc. contributed by friends of the late Dr. K. M. Ashraf. To avoid duplication of similar matter and for reasons of space a few passages have been omitted where indicated. The original manuscripts of all contributions are now in the Ashraf Collection in the German Academy of Sciences Berlin.

Editor.

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प्रधान मंत्री भवन
PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Dehra Dun,
October 13, 1963

Dear Dr. Kruger,

I received your letter of the 3rd August a month after you had written it.

I am sorry I cannot find time to write much about Dr. K.M. Ashraf. I came in contact with Dr. Ashraf in the middle thirties. I invited him to join the office of the All India Congress Committee when I was President of that organization. I think this was about 1936. He was a hard worker and he did his work conscientiously and with enthusiasm. He was chiefly concerned with our contacts with countries in Western Asia and his knowledge of the Persian language especially helped him in this work.

I lost touch with him later and he did not keep good health. I was sorry to learn of his passing away.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Horst Kruger,
Wissenschaftlicher Arbeitsleiter,
Deutsche Akademie Der Wissenschaften Zu Berlin,
Berlin W8.

Plate 4. Facsimile of a letter by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

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The old economic system of India was disintegrating in the 19th century. Many a vocation and source of income was disappearing and people had started leaving their ancestral homelands in search of employment. Among these people was Hakim Kunwar Muin who had left his ancestral village – Tasi, in the state of Alwar – to settle down permanently at Daryapur, in the tehsil of Hathras, district of Aligarh. His were the olden days, free from the complexities of life. Carrying his medicines in a bag, Hakim Sahib would make a round of the village, examining patients and giving them medicines out of his bag. In a short while he had earned a reputation as a hakim and came to be invited to distant places for consultation.

In the family of Kunwar Muin, Hindus and Muslims lived together often intermarrying with each other. The children were given both Hindu and Muslim names. It was in Kunwar Muin's family that Murli Singh was born who, according to the custom, was first trained in the Persian language. Later he passed the Entrance Examination at the age of eighteen. Thanks to the efforts of his friends, he became a stationmaster at Shahdara

Shahdara was a junction for the mail trains running between Delhi and Calcutta.

On one occasion, owing to Murli Singh's default, a collision of two mail trains coming from opposite directions occurred. He was arrested and brought before the court. When the judge discovered that the defendant was only 18 years old he was released on the grounds of his youth. The company, however, was indicted for giving responsible posts to young, inexperienced men. But the pride of Rajput blood did not allow Murli Singh to return home; he went over to Rajasthan instead and spent a couple of years there. When the Awadh – Rohilkhand railway line was commissioned, Murli Singh put in an application for employment as a guard under the assumed name of Murad Ali Khan. He worked in this capacity until his retirement.

Murad Ali Khan was married to a lady named Anchchi. She belonged to Gohanpur in the Mathura district. This was the mother of Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf Ali Khan, who was born on November 25, 1903, in the village of Daryapur. Ashraf's life was one of struggle, love of freedom, and a keen desire for knowledge.

When Ashraf was four years old, his father, as was the custom, appointed a Maulvi to teach him and his companion Shankar Lal the Quran and Islamic divinity. After this they were sent to the primary school. The headmaster and the·

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second master of this school were Pandit Chhatarpal and Shri Ram Lal. After a year and a half here, Ashraf was sent to school in the Aligarh tehsil.

At this time hockey, of course, was unknown in India, though people had some familiarity with cricket and football. Ashraf, however, was more interested in typically Indian games like *Kabaddi* and kite-flying. Instead of purchasing the waxed thread used for kite-flying from the market, he would prepare it himself. Even at this early age he showed the self-confidence and self-reliance which later on added lustre to his personality.

The days spent at Daryapur left a deep impression on Ashraf. To the end of his life he remained in very close contact with the people of this place. Whenever Ashraf paid a visit to Daryapur, everyone rushed to see him. If anyone was unable to come to him, Ashraf would visit his house. In the beginning of 1961, when Ashraf was here for the last time, he went to see every one of his relatives and friends at Daryapur, Sujanpur and Gohanpur and went away with affectionate memories of them.

In 1909 he left Aligarh and obtained admission in the Hewett Muslim School, Moradabad. Tired of the strained city life at Moradabad, Ashraf longed to return to the carefree, unrestrained village life of Daryapur. In 1912 he ran away and met his old companion Shankar Lal, and both of them left home intending to have a happy life in the Himalayan valleys. The weather was biting cold. The two had brought nothing with them even to cover themselves. They spent a night on Saoni Railway Station, and when in the morning they came to their senses, they returned home.

Ashraf was lean and thin when he was admitted to the Hewett Muslim School. Restive in spirit, he was strangely given more to studies then to games. Most of his time was spent in the school library or reading books borrowed from friends. Whenever there was a discussion in the class Ashraf never failed to participate in it. This earned him the affection not only of his class, but of the entire school. He showed some promise of being a good speaker, not only having a command of facts but able to give them an impressive presentation.

Most of the students at this school came either from Kasraul or Bhatti and they formed their own groups, constantly engaged in mutual hostility. Ashraf used to live with Master Khuda Ali Khan at Kasraul, but he always kept himself free from these groupings. He had a few close friends in the Bhatti group which ensured his neutrality in these conflicts.

Among his teachers was Qamar Sahib. While teaching English poetry, he would often recite Urdu couplets or poems, generally from Amir and Dagh, and sometimes lines of his own, as he himself was a poet. These recitals introduced a certain amount of freedom in the class and the students would put all sorts of questions to him, sometimes presenting their own childish compositions. Ashraf participated in all this with great enthusiasm.

In the sixth class, Ashraf had taken Arabic as an optional subject. Arabic was taught in his school by Maulvi Rahmatullah Khan. The Maulvi had a taste for politics and often used to repeat a proverb which means 'it is better to finish off your

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enemy before he strikes you'. His 'enemy', of course, was the British rule. He was so firm in his conviction that he would tell his pupils that it was a sin to produce children, for any child then born would be a slave of the British. To obtain freedom was an act of redemption. To attain this high ideal, the Maulvi needed an organization whose members were courageous, fearless and honest, who would neither be afraid of the British might, nor susceptible to mundane temptations which could compromise their resolve.

Ashraf was so much impressed by Maulvi Rahmatullah that he formed a deep attachment for the Arabic language. His class-fellows were surprised at the ease and accuracy with which Ashraf memorised the rules of grammar of Arabic and made quick translations of easy Arabic writings. In the Arabic class an anti-British, or, to put it in modern language, an anti-Imperialist sentiment and love of freedom, began to take root. In addition to Maulvi Rahmatullah, Maulvi Istafa Karim Sahib also contributed to the growth of Ashraf's personality.

Istafa Karim Sahib lived in a street called Diwan Ka Bazaar. His house had become the centre of political activity in the street. He had actually formed a political group and given it the name of "Ḥazb Allah". Ashraf was a member of this group, and along with other members, used to go to the Maulvi's house every Sunday. The Maulvi began by acquainting them with the poetry and personality of Hasrat and later on introduced them to Iqbal. Finally he taught them those verses of the Quran which justify war for securing one's rights. Maulvi Istafa Karim's talks in Ashraf's words 'carried conviction'. The Maulvi used frequently to emphasize that Jihad with the sword was obligatory on every Muslim and that the British were the greatest enemies of Islam and the Muselmans. Every member of their group took an oath to wage a holy war on the British.

Besides Ashraf's teachers, some of his friends, like Maulvi Mazhar, though illiterate, had similar convictions, and were sympathetic towards the working-class. Half jokingly they would say "we are better than the educated people for we can stand on our own feet."

Those were the days when religious discussions were very popular and young Muslims participated in these discussions with great enthusiasm. The other distraction was provided by Parsi theatrical performances. But neither of these amusements could attract Ashraf. However, it was under the influence of Maulana Hasrat's wife that Ashraf became very regular in saying his prayers.

After passing his matriculation Ashraf sought and obtained admission into M.A.O. College, Aligarh, an institution which was famous not only in India but even abroad for its staff – particularly the European teachers – and for good education. But the state of affairs was such that every imaginable discrimination between the Europeans, particularly the British, and the Indians was practised in order to demonstrate the superiority of the former. The highest posts were reserved only for the British, and the Indians were underpaid in comparison to them. There was discrimination even in the conditions of service. The authorities went to the limit of giving preferential treatment to the children of European parents born in Europe as against those born in India. In the railway compartments, from the

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first to the third class, Indians were expected to vacate their seats as soon as a European entered. In schools and colleges young students were asked to write essays on the blessings of the British Government. Sometimes the superiority of the British was impressed upon young minds. But Ashraf was of a different mettle. On one occasion a British teacher by the name of Ganes asked his students what they would do if they were travelling in a train and a Britisher entered. One after another they respectfully stood up to answer that they would salute the gentleman and vacate their seat. When Ashraf's turn came he said he would do nothing but just keep sitting. Ganes was infuriated. "Why", he shouted, "you are expected to salute him and offer him your seat." "Not me!" Ashraf shouted back, "I wouldn't do it." For this he was expelled from the class and fined.

When the first world war ended and the Ali brothers were released from jail, a wave of enthusiasm spread throughout the land. Preparations were made everywhere to welcome them. When finally they visited M.A.O. College, Aligarh, Ashraf was bursting with happiness. Maulana Mohammad Ali along with Gandhiji made an appeal to the students to give up their studies which taught them to be the slaves of the British.

Thus began a tug-of-war between the students and the authorities. The authorities and their toadies used every available means of repression. The students responded by standing together united and firm. The college was closed; the freedom-loving teachers and students responded by founding the Jamia Millia. The movement spread everywhere, and resolutions supporting non-co-operation were passed in many important colleges.

Life at Jamia was very simple. There was hardly any furniture in the classrooms which were mostly in tents. But there was an atmosphere of freedom, enthusiasm and an indestructible optimism. Often important leaders visited the place and met the students in a free, intimate atmosphere. When in April 1921, it was decided to celebrate the first National Week, the students at Jamia showed great keenness to take part in it. No one was bothered about how they would get to the villages, how they would stay there, what food there would be etc.

Along with these activities, as they were called, Ashraf's study of the changing world of his day continued. When, after the Sultan of Turkey had surrendered, Mustafa-ul-Kamal recruited common villagers as soldiers and engaged the British in war, Ashraf and his friends felt extremely happy that Britain had been challenged. When Lenin's government in Russia recognized the new government of Turkey and the Russian representative Chicherin expressed his opposition to Britain and supported Kamal, we had a discussion about the new Russian government. We realized that among the European countries there was at least one, Soviet Russia, which supported the liberation movements in Asia, and this was a new angle from which the division between the East and the West had to be assessed.

The arrest of Maulana Mohammad Ali gave us a new problem as to the rôle of the individual in a movement. Generally it was held that it was the big leaders who carried on a movement, and that when they did not remain at the helm the

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movement faded away. But the arrest of the Maulana resulted in imparting a new force to the movement. It became clear to us then that although the leaders give birth to a movement and take it further, the movement itself clears the path for the leaders and inspires in them new potentialities.

In 1922 while Mustafa Kamal abolished the Caliphate, Gandhiji, after the Chauri Chaura incidents, withdrew the non-cooperation movement. As a consequence of these developments, the very foundations on which the entire edifice of politics was being built were shaken. With the recession of the nationalist movement, Hindu and Muslim revivalist movements (movements of *shuddhi* and *tableegh*) gained strength. Sandhan, which was the centre of Ashraf's community, also became the centre of the revivalist activities.

A large number of these groups were functioning there, and on Ashraf's insistence we joined him there and called meetings under the joint auspices of the various groups. We wanted only those points to be stressed which were common to all the groups. But to our shocked surprise, all of them insisted on their own specific principles. In addition to this all kinds of lies and falsehoods were propagated through the press. The press exaggerated the facts about conversions. If two persons embraced Islam the press would magnify it to thousands. All this disgusted us. The veil from our eyes was being more than lifted.

We started realizing that the Maulanas who laid all kinds of claims to spirituality, who every moment referred to the Day of Judgement and were never tired of asserting Muslim brotherhood, were fighting among themselves for the loaves and fishes. We realized that with all their pretensions to the contrary, all their acts were motivated by narrow personal interests. Our attitude to religion was changed from one of devotion and reverence to diagnosis. Personal interests, we thought, could not only dominate ideological principles but also helped in their creation.

Ashraf's association with Shaukat Usmani in this period indicates his growing interest in and links with persons of a socialist way of thinking. We started receiving M. N. Roy's writings which discussed the Russian Revolution, the reality of the socialist system, and the weakening of big empires as a result of capitalist and imperialist exploitation. Ashraf occupied himself with these writings and sometimes we would discuss what a socialist system might achieve in India.

Serious study and work did not affect the simplicity of his life. Despite the fact that he had already graduated from Jamia, he was not only present at our farewell party, but also plunged himself into the *Kabaddi* match.

The movement for independence had subsided and those students of M.A.O. College who had gone over to Jamia started joining the Aligarh Muslim University. In 1923 Ashraf also joined a B. A. (Hons) course and despite the initial hostility of certain sections in the university, with the support and assistance of Prof. Mohammad Habib and through his own ability and deep study, Ashraf soon made a place for himself. He won laurels particularly by his speeches in the Union which always had "abundant and fresh material".

His popularity in the Union grew so much that the next year he was elected to the highest office of the Union, the Vice-Presidentship. A fierce election campaign

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was conducted against him. Pamphlets and handbills were brought out; cartoons were drawn. Charges of treason were levelled. But Ashraf and his supporters won by an overwhelming majority.

Under Ashraf's Vice-Presidentship, the Union, from being a mere debating club, became a means for the intellectual development of the student community. His address instead of being the usual eulogy of the government and the university authorities, put forward the claims of the new times. The topics selected for debates had close relevance to the national problems and helped to widen the thinking and understanding of the students.

Earlier the debates were dishonestly conducted, with the teachers preparing the speeches for the students and attempts to retain the first prize and the trophy for the college or the university. Ashraf saw the damage that this practice did and instituted the Mustafa Kamal Trophy for which Rs. 900/- were collected from Nawab Ullah Khan Sahib. When the first debate was held the Aligarh team in accordance with the new rules did not participate as competitors. Only the performance of teams coming from outside was judged for the awards. The credit for the convention that local speakers do not participate as competitors, should go to the Muslim University Union and its old boy Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf.

Ashraf went further and made the Union a significant institution by forging links with the Legislative Assembly. Members of the central Legislative Assembly were invited to participate in debates on topics which, in those days, were considered revolutionary. Diwan Chaman Lal and Goswami from the Swaraj Party, and Mian Muhammad Shafi from among the supporters of the Government, came to participate in the debate on a topic of current political controversy: – "In the opinion of this House present reforms are inadequate and unsatisfactory". Diwan Chaman Lal gave examples of the potentialities of India and the exploitation of India's wealth by Britain. He concluded that the proposed reforms were designed to conceal the British exploitation of India. On the other hand Mian Shafi emphasized the differences among Indians and their backwardness, and tried to prove that the proposed reforms were in fact in advance of the times.

In 1924 there was another big change in Ashraf's life. He was married in the month of May and talked about his wife, Kulsoom, in words full of love and affection. The union work and the responsibilities of married life did not affect his love and affection for his associates. Ashraf could never adopt the attitude of a boss over the employees of the Union and the junior students, which was considered to be a part of the office of vice-presidentship. His younger brothers stayed with him and he would even wash their clothes and feel proud of it.

The Muslim University had not yet completely recovered from the damage which its opposition to the non-co-operation movement had done to it. The Vice-Chancellor Aftab Ahmad Khan was anxious that the old boys of both groups should gather again and think of ways and means for the advancement of the University. He mentioned the Jubilee Celebrations to Prof. Habib, and after getting his consent expressed the need for a group of enthusiastic young men to do the necessary work. Prof. Habib suggested Ashraf, Amiruddin Ahmad Qidwai

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and me. Room No. 16 in the Pucci Barracks was converted into an office and we started work with a few pencils, some carbons and sheets of paper.

Persons of a different persuasion, like Maulana Ahmed Ali and his associates, Mian Mohammad Shafi, and Mr. Jinnah, came to participate in the celebrations. The Maharaja of Alwar had also been invited and according to the prevailing convention he was to be given an address by the Union. Dr. Miauddin wanted Ashraf to quit the office before the address was presented but he did not succeed in this.

Welcoming the Maharaja, Ashraf delivered a very balanced and sophisticated speech. He talked of the secular traditions of Aligarh and also told the audience that the first person to graduate from Aligarh had been a Hindu. In his speech he also referred to the fact that his ancestors had been the subjects of the Maharaja at one time. The Maharaja was flattered to learn that this outstanding student and impressive speaker was, through his ancestors, connected with the state of Alwar. Ashraf was contacted by his aide-de-camp and met the Maharaja, who invited him to come to Alwar after completing his studies at Aligarh and also hinted at a scholarship for further studies in England.

Immediately after the results of the examinations were out, he went to Muzaffarnagar and started legal practice. His house soon became a social, intellectual and semi-political centre. All kinds of people gathered at his house including peasants to whom Ashraf would talk in their own dialect.

At this time the Maharaja of Alwar sent for him and offered him a scholarship for further studies in England. Through the Maharaja he also got a passport which in those days was not easy to obtain, particularly for a nationalist and a non-co-operator. Kulsum, Sultan[1] and myself went to see him off at Bombay and, probably on September 27, 1927, we bade him good-bye.

In England Ashraf joined two courses of study. He joined Lincoln's Inn for Bar-at-law and later the School of Oriental Studies for his Ph. D. under the supervision of Sir Wolseley Hague who was a friend and an admirer of the Maharaja of Alwar.

His life in England was in many ways different from that in India. After the suffocating atmosphere of India, he now breathed the free atmosphere of England. The Maharaja, conscious of his status, provided him with sufficient means for a luxurious and comfortable life. But this kind of life could neither mar his simplicity nor diminish the intensity of his patriotism or his humane attitude. In his second or third letter he asked me to write my letters to him in Urdu so that in the alien atmosphere of England he could at least enjoy the pleasure of correspondence in his own language.

Maulana Muhammad Ali had gone to England for treatment. Ashraf and his nationalist friends would often go to meet him. At the residence of Maulana they met Saklatwala. Maulana had immense affection for the old students of Jamia and he invited all the Indian students to dinner at a big hotel where the choicest

[1] Kulsoom's brother [P. M. A.].

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dishes were served to them. The young admirers of the Maulana were surprised because Maulana with his limited financial resources could not easily afford such a grand dinner. Ashraf could not help saying, "Maulana, it is a great injustice to us that for us you should add to your burdens." Maulana said, "Do you want to deprive the father of the pleasure of giving good food to his children?" Ashraf's letter was full of his account of the feast and also indicated how, despite his differences with him, the Maulana had charmed him by his love and affection. These

Plate 5. Shaukat Ali (centre front), Shapurji Saklatvala (back row centre), K. M. Ashraf (back row second from left), London, c. 1929

incidents are apparently very minor and ordinary but they reveal his humanity and warmheartedness. Ashraf believed in basic human values and whenever he found a glimpse of these values, he communicated the pleasure of his experience to others.

In December 1928, Ashraf was recalled for the Jubilee Celebration of the Maharaja of Alwar. He was given the task of looking after the Nawabs and Rajas of Indian States. But he could not arrange for the orgies of debauchery for the gratification of their sensuality. He also saw the life of the Maharaja at close quarters. No one could be served food unless the Maharaja felt hungry. No food was served for the whole day, and when at twelve o'clock at night the table was

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laid, the Maharaja just tasted the food and left the table, when the others also had to leave and follow him.

Ashraf felt no respect for any of them. Once after the celebration the Maharaja ran over a constable merely to save the mudguard of his car from being damaged, as though the constable were not made of flesh and blood but of dirt.

Ashraf was deeply shocked and thought if this man could kill another man without a word of regret, how could any confidence be placed in him? Even if he continued to keep him in order to complete his education, service in that palace and state would be nothing but brutality and inhumanity. He quietly left the palace regardless of the difficulties and problems that poverty entailed. How could he sacrifice the riches of freedom and the blessings of humanity?

In December 1927, I had returned to Aligarh and had started working in the university school. Ashraf, after giving up the Maharaja's service, went to Jamia for some time and then came over to Aligarh. We stayed in the city for a few months together. We talked more about the future than about England. The Nehru Report had been published at that time and had aroused the hostility of some Muslim leaders like Maulana Shaukat. We were supporters of the Nehru Report and were so enthusiastic in our support that at public meetings we challenged leaders like Shaukat Ali. Although not as active in the political field as before, we always remained associated with the national movement and the movement to combat communalism.

Seth Ahmad Ullah-din of Sikandarabad (Hyderabad state) gave scholarships of six pounds per month for education in England. Ashraf secured a scholarship and at the end of 1929 left for England. There were no comforts and luxuries. It was a difficult life and even penurious. He shared a room with another student and even cooked his own food. But his passion for study did not wane. On the contrary, it became more intense.

Ashraf wrote in one of his articles, "Now I have met those friends who have to go without food"; and this, in a sense, was the final experience and turning point in his life. Ashraf met Shapurji Saklatwala at his house and on his way back went to Highgate cemetery. Here he took a pledge at the grave of a new teacher, Karl Marx. It was the firmest pledge he ever took.

Saiyed Mohammad Tonki

(Abridged translation by Nand Lal Gupta)

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At first I was pleasantly surprised and then words failed me in praise of this custom in Ceylon, when on my arrival there I came across a respectable family where the wife was a Buddhist and the husband a Christian. Every Ceylonese considers himself as a 'Sinhalese' first, regardless of religious differences. Even a Roman Catholic takes pride in being a 'Sinhalese'. He feels 'Sinhalese' language, Sinhalese literature and Sinhalese culture stir his warm blood. I wondered then why India had not made a working compromise like that. Why had Indian nationality not asserted its superiority over Hinduism and Islam? This aspect of Ceylonese life greatly pleased both me and my friend Anand Kausalyayana. We did not then know that such an experiment had once been tried in our country too, although it could not gain recognition in all parts of the country.

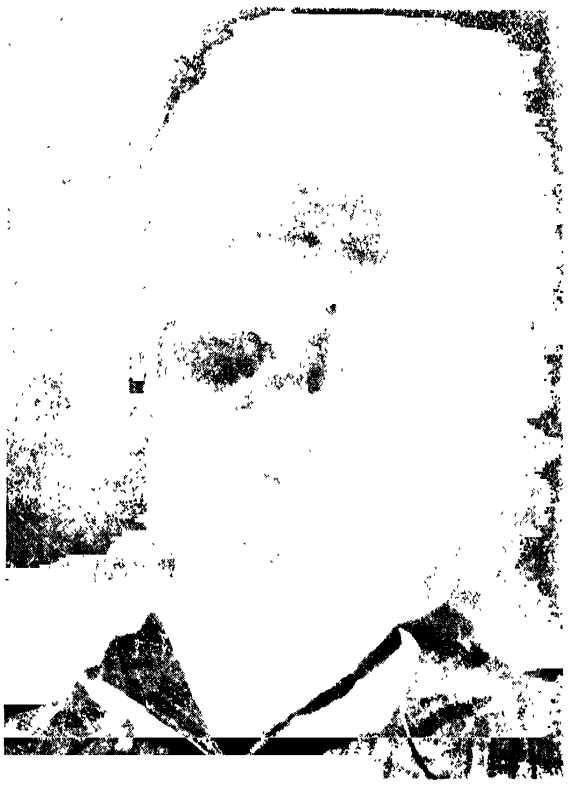

Plate 6. K. M. Ashraf in forties

In the past, the Rajputs of Western U. P., Rajputana and some portions of the Punjab had realised the dangers of the Hindu-Muslim tangle and had devised a way out to solve this complex problem. They decided that their Rajput brotherhood should take first place before all other considerations — Rajput valour, Rajput history and Rajput pride were to be the base upon which they sought to build up their unity. One might say "Allah", the other "Ram";

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one might be called "Rustom Khan", the other "Bahadur Singh" – these differences were not to vitiate their Rajput nationality.

Although all the Rajputs were not unanimous about it, there were millions who adopted this path. Many Tomars chose this way, as did many Chaubans also. There were Gehlots and there were Panwars in this movement. They were not discouraged although all Rajputs did not take to this novel way. Perhaps these ancients were confident that the path adopted by them would one day be accepted by the whole of India. They were before their time; but this too certainly required more courage.

The Muslims called them "Neo-Muslims". The Hindus called them "Malkanas" or "Adhbarias". They never bothered much as to which aspect of their cultural heritage should be jealously guarded and which should be left out. They considered it however their sacred duty to protect "the Cow and the Brahmin". In marriage they always took care to avoid their parents' "gotra" (clan). Both "Saptapadi" (seven turns around the sacred fire) and "Niqua" (Muslim marriage rite) were equally prevalent. Thus they made the Hindu-Muslim quarrel non-existent within their own world of a few lakhs of people.

Daryapur is a small village in the Hathras Tehsil of Aligarh District. Many of these Malkana Rajput families reside in that village. This small village of Daryapur has given birth to many famous personalities. Pandit Nattha Ram, the *Swang* Maestro, belongs to this place. Munshi Nawal Kishore, the founder of Nawal Kishore Press, was born here.

Sometime in the last century, Thakur Kunwar Singh settled down in this village after migrating from Alwar. Kunwar Singh got a son who was named Thakur Murad Ali (Murlidhar) Khan – "Khan" goes better with a Muslim name than Singh. Thakur Murad Ali learnt some English and then joined the railway service. He worked as guard and stationmaster at various places. As a Rajput he was also a part of the Reserve forces and had seen service during World War I in Africa, Iraq etc.

Thakur Murad Ali was married to Anchchi, daughter of Thakur Nannhu Singh of the village of Gohanpur in Mathura District. Anchchi's mother was Sundari. Anchchi gave birth to a son and a daughter, and died in her youth. The son was named Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf. He was born on the November 25, 1903.

He was hardly four when his mother passed away. But Thakur Murad Ali showered so much love upon his son that he never missed his mother. Thakur Sahib had constantly to keep on moving from place to place in connection with his service but he took good care to educate his son properly.

Ashraf was enrolled in the Upper Primary School at Daryapur. Next to his father, Pandit Ramlal who was a teacher there, had the greatest influence on young Ashraf. Ashraf learnt Hindi. He did now know Urdu at all till he reached the VII Class. Who could imagine at that time that this same Ashraf would become a great scholar of Arabic and Persian later on!

Later, Ashraf joined Dharma Sabha High School, Aligarh, where he read up to the III Class. Here at Aligarh Ashraf had an opportunity to listen to some Arya Samaj lectures in the company of his brother-in-law. The religious teachings of

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Arya Samaj did not make much impression on Ashraf. But that was the period of the First World War when Arya Samaj stoutly propagated nationalism and patriotism. Young Ashraf learnt his first lessons in patriotism through these Arya Samaj propagandists.

When Thakur Murad Ali was transferred to Moradabad, he got his son admitted in the Muslim High School in the IV Class. Ashraf offered Hindi and Sanskrit. When he reached the VII Class, he had to offer Persian and Urdu as there was no arrangement to teach Hindi and Sanskrit in that class.

Ashraf was a firstrate bad boy. He was a very bright student, but he never paid much heed to studies. Once a teacher was about to cane him when Ashraf caught hold of his hand and went direct to report to the Headmaster. The Headmaster, Zahiruddin, sized up the young rebel correctly and gave him leave to carry on his studies in any manner he liked, with or without attending classes. Ashraf was now free. He was the leader of a brave band of youth.

He passed Matriculation in 1918 with Persian as one of his subjects. It was a real credit for such a fun-loving student to get a Second Division. During his school life he was influenced most by Maulvi Istafa Karim who belonged to the patriotic group of Obeidullah Sindhi and who was working for freedom, along with other disciples of his Master in different parts of the country.

There was one other reason why the flame of patriotism was kindled in Ashraf at the tender age of 11. His father, Murad Ali, was a great friend of one Shankar Lal of Daryapur. His sister-in-law had brought Ashraf up as her own son. This Shankar Lal was involved by the authorities in a case of political murder. It was therefore quite natural for Ashraf to get interested in politics at this age.

While at Moradabad, Ashraf had learnt by heart many songs and anecdotes about Dhingra and Sufi Amba Prashad. An order was issued to the schools during the First World War period to salute the Union Jack on a particular day. Ashraf flatly refused to do so, and, sensing the resentment of the students, the Headmaster of the Muslim High School did not insist upon it either. The news of Annie Besant's detention also helped to rouse the politician in Ashraf.

When Ashraf joined the M. A. O. College at Aligarh in 1918, it had not yet taken the shape of a University. Examinations were conducted by the Aligarh University. Ashraf had offered Arabic, Logic and History in the F. A. The signs of the great orator that Ashraf now is were clearly manifested even while he was at Moradabad. His love for debates and lectures increased further in Aligarh. He was no longer careless as heretofore about his studies. Not that he was any whit the less gay and humorous. Only now his interest in studies increased.

Ashraf passed the F. A. in 1920 and joined the B. A. course. Just then the country was reverberating with Non-Co-operation, Khilafat and Mahatma Gandhi's ideas. Maulana Mohammad Ali founded the Jamia Millia in Aligarh. Ashraf also joined it. The students and teachers of institutions like these devoted more of their time to political agitation than to studies. Ashraf was a fine speaker and he belonged to Aligarh. He now openly came forward to take part in the national movement. He concentrated mainly on collecting for the Tilak Swaraya Fund, the

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propagation of Khadi and Hindu-Muslim Unity. He passed B. A. from Jamia Millia in 1923.

By 1924 the movement had almost petered out. This fact, coupled with his father's insistence, made Ashraf rejoin the Muslim University. Ashraf was no longer the old devil-may-care type. He had developed a taste for studies. He offered Muslim Theology, Islamic Philosophy and History. He passed B. A. in 1925 and M. A. in 1926, both in the Second Division. Then, by 1927, he had not only passed the L.L.B Examination in the First Division, but broken all past records.

Ashraf had a deep-seated love for his country's freedom. He was much interested. in Congress politics for the sake of which he had once already given up his studies. In 1922, Ashraf was introduced to Shaukat Usmani who talked about socialism. But the nationalist Ashraf could feel no attraction to it. Rather he was repelled by such talk. The works of M. N. Roy further accentuated his dislike of socialism. He began to regard such talk as anti-nationalist.

He met Muzaffar Ahmed and Kutubuddin in 1923, just after the Gaya Congress session. But these meetings could not abate his dissatisfaction with socialism. He returned from Calcutta an anti-Communist. Later in life when he became a Communist, Ashraf often used to reproach his old friends, saying that as Communism was the staunchest supporter of national freedom, had they related it to his nationalist ideas he might have reached the right path much earlier.

Ashraf began losing faith in Gandhism after the Chauri Chaura incident in 1922. While studying at the University, he began to turn towards socialism, but his knowledge thereof was still very hazy. He visited Alwar in 1926 after passing M. A. He felt a special attraction to Alwar, that being his grandfather's town. He was honoured by the State and was made to stay there as the guest of the state. The ruler went out on a hunting expedition. Ashraf had an opportunity to see for himself the hardships suffered by the "Begari" labourers. Here he found human beings treated like dumb brutes. This further increased his hatred for the present social system.

Ashraf practised law, but only for three months, at Muzaffarnagar. The ruler of Alwar tried to make him come back to his state. Ashraf agreed, but only after visiting England where he wished to go for further studies. He was awarded a state scholarship for this purpose.

Ashraf reached London in 1927. Although he joined Lincoln's Inn and attended for three years, his heart was not in Law. He desired to study the social life of India. As the subject of his thesis for Ph. D. he chose the social life of India from 1200 to 1550. His professors were greatly surprised when they were told about this subject, not because it smacked of socialism, but because they thought that for this particular period of Indian history there would not be enough material for a Ph. D. thesis.

His tutor was SirWolseley Haig. Ashraf used to visit him once a week without fail, but never once did they talk about the thesis. Prof. Haig had little hope, but Ashraf on going through the pages of Arabic and Persian sources had seen that if he searched carefully he was bound to find concrete materials for his theme. As he probed deeper many obscure passages of history were gradually illuminated.

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He met many politically-minded Indians in England. He became fast friends with Saklatwala, Sajaad Zaheer, Mohmuduzaffar and many others. After that his ideas turned towards communism. He offered his last prayers to God in 1927.

His Highness of Alwar was celebrating his Jubilee in 1929. Ashraf was studying on a state scholarship. His Highness sent for him and he arrived in Alwar. The days that he spent at Alwar during these Jubilee celebrations not merely opened his eyes, they struck him like a beam of light. A million and a half rupees were wasted on the Jubilee in one week. Many of the native princes visited Alwar. Ashraf was the Private Secretary to His Highness at the time. Lord Irwin also came. His Highness had specially entrusted the arrangements for his welcome to Ashraf.

These three months were an experience for Ashraf. He kept a diary of each day during these three months. If and when it is published, the reader will be truly astounded by the gruesomeness of this leprous limb of India to which we give the name of the Princely States.

At last the inevitable happened. Ashraf could no longer suppress the rebel in him. Loyalty to the ruler of Alwar became more than he could endure and he left Alwar for good.

His father was still alive. He was a spendthrift where it concerned his son. He never drove his son against his will. He had only two counsels for him: "Never take a loan" and "Spend all you earn". Even when he was at Aligarh, his father used to make him liberal allowances. If anyone protested, he would reply, "I am his servant".

Ashraf returned to London early in 1930 at his father's expense and came back to India with a Ph. D. degree in 1932.

The same year a Labour Conference was held at Kanpur. Ashraf joined it. He took an active part in the peasant movement in Mathura, as also in the movement against forced labour imposed on the Chamars there. Thakur Murad Ali lived till 1934. He did not like his son's ways but he never interfered with him either. Even to this day, Ashraf regards his father and Pandit Ramlal as responsible for the development of his personality.

Being a serious student of history and as a result of the profound impact of Marxism, Ashraf is, on the one hand, deeply interested in research into his country's culture and history. On the other hand, he wants to see his country free. He wrote offering his services to the Servants of the People Society (founded by Lala Lajpat Rai) and to the Servants of India Society at Poona. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult for people professing different faiths and cultures to work together until they are absolutely clear about their attitude towards nationalism, culture, religion and so on. That is why only Hindus could join these societies of Lalaji and Gokhale.

Ashraf agreed to accept a lecturership for a year only from 1934 to 1935 in the Muslim University. While he was there he went to attend the Lucknow Congress and after that he remained a member of the All India Congress Committee. It was at his suggestion that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru established the Foreign and Publicity Departments in the Congress. Both Dr. Ashraf

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and his London friend, Dr. Ahmad, began working in the various departments of the All India Congress Committee.

In 1937 Ashraf contested a seat in the Assembly on a Congress ticket in the Mathura-Agra Mohammedan constituency. It was a tough election fight. Many attempts were made to prejudice the electors against him on the grounds of his being a Congressite. Yet he got a majority vote in many tehsils and was only defeated by an over-all margin of 275 votes. This would not have been the case had not some of his own supporters betrayed him.

Dr. Ashraf has acted as the spokesman of the Communists in Congress sessions since 1936. His speeches at the Congress sessions at Tripura, Ramgarh, Poona, Allahabad, Bombay and at the various All India Congress Committee meetings are eagerly read by the public.

Dr. Ashraf is a member of the Board of the "Azad Muslim Conference". He is a great admirer of Islamic culture. But he also remembers that the brothers of his wife, Kulsum, are named Pratap Singh and Dhan Singh, that the sister of his father is also a Hindu, and that at his own marriage he made the Seven Sacred Turns round the fire. Who then could be better qualified to defend Indian culture than Ashraf who feels Indian in every drop of his blood? Who else could be a greater defender of Islamic culture than Ashraf, who is not merely a serious student of it but honours its services to humanity? And, being a Communist, what else can he be except a staunch supporter of the freedom and culture of every country and of every community?

He treats with equal love and respect the magnificent achievements in the History, Philosophy, Art, Culture and Literature of mankind. Ashraf stands at the centre from where all lines reach the different points on the circumference without intersecting.

Ashraf desires to see an authentic history of his country from the earliest times to the present day, but he does not want merely to re-arrange the materials of writers like Vincent Smith. Moreover he does not want a history of kings and queens. What he dreams of is the history of the people, the history of society and the history of every aspect of life.

He wants to leave this task of writing history to the next generation. For the moment, he wants to publish in a number of volumes all the materials that are available in the world pertaining to every aspect of our Indian life, beginning from the Indus Valley and the pre-Vedic period down to the present. Whatever may have been preserved about our country, in any language of the world, in clay, stone, brass, iron, copper or in unwritten songs, stories, customs or charms, he would like to be included in these volumes. This would only be possible if hundreds of scholars worked consistently for ten or fifteen years. But it will be made possible, for Ashraf firmly believes that the future is with us.

RAHUL SANKRITYAYAN

(Translated from: Rahul Sankrityayan, *Naye bharat ke naye neta*, Allahabad, 1943, pp. 1–11.)

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I pen these lines in Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, almos three years after the death of Dr. Muhammad Ashraf. It was in this very town that he breathed his last and it is here that his last remains lie. And I think of another meeting here in this very town, a year before his death. Our friendship and comradeship had been life-long – I first met him in London in 1928 – thirty-seven years ago – when Ashraf was a student in the University of London and I a student at Oxford University. My first impression of him was of intense vitality, of sharp and extraordinary intelligence, of burning patriotism and of a revolutionary, who knew no bounds and considered no sacrifice too great to achieve his goal – the independence of our dear Motherland and the establishment there of a socialist social order. Soon Ashraf became a member of the first group of Indian communist students. After taking his doctorate in London Ashraf was back home in India. British intelligence had detected him already as a "dangerous" man. Jobs in the educational service of India – for which he was indeed highly qualified – were denied to him, and in any case, he was himself more keen to plunge himself directly into the national liberation movement. A fiery and eloquent orator, he soon became a peasant leader, which he remained essentially all his life – being of peasant stock himself. He became a leader of the left inside the Indian National Congress while at the same time building the illegal Communist Party of India. Being a Muslim himself, he was particularly active for the bringing in and integration of millions of Indian Muslims within the main current of the national liberation movement. One of the most important and significant contributions of Dr. Ashraf to the liberation struggle was his fight against the reactionary elements amongst the Muslims of India, who, instigated by the British imperialists, were taking the Muslims towards the path of separation. Ashraf opposed the ideology of the Indian Muslim League tooth and nail, made a deep study of Muslim social and political movements and told the Muslim intelligentsia and the Muslim masses of India that their salvation lay with the struggle of the rest of the Indian masses for independence and democracy. Ashraf, naturally, also fought the reactionary Hindu chauvinists of the majority community in India who wanted to degrade and oppress the Muslim minority. The outbreak of the Second World War changed the political situation in India. Together with thousands of other patriots Ashraf was thrown into prison in 1940 and released only two years later, when the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union gave a new turn to the war. In prison, as a result

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of a prolonged hunger-strike lasting for over thirty days in the Deoli Concentration Camp, Ashraf's health suffered serious injury. Although through his strong will and disciplined life Ashraf recovered, perhaps a permanent injury had been inflicted on his constitution, which, I think, was the main reason for his untimely and sudden death in 1962. A very active political life – he now became a member of the Central Committee of the C. P. I. – from 1942 to 1948, told on his health again. He was lying severely ill at Karachi, the capital of newly-created Pakistan, when he was again arrested and thrown into prison. The Government of Pakistan now expelled him from Pakistan and Ashraf went to England. After several years' stay in England, where he again started his studies of Medieval Indian history, Ashraf came back to India und became a lecturer in history in the University of Delhi. I am not a historian myself, but it is generally acknowledged that Dr. Ashraf now became the greatest authority on Medieval Indian history. A life-long research scholar, he was the first among our historians to study and to understand Medieval Indian history in the light of scientific Marxism. He influenced deeply a whole group of brilliant young Indian historians whom he taught and trained. He joined the Humboldt University and went to the USSR, continuing his research and studies of the sources of Indian history and had vast plans of writing down the results of his research when death overtook him.

But it would be wrong to think of Dr. Ashraf in the last phase of his life as a mere historian. At my request in 1957, he wrote a brilliant treatise in Urdu on the political and ideological trends among the Indian Muslims during the last one hundred years. Every line of this brilliant book of about 150 pages shows that Ashraf really was a profound Marxist historian, an Indian patriot and an ardent communist revolutionary. In the last conversations I had with Ashraf in Berlin he told me that on his return to India he wanted to plunge himself again into active political life and organise all over the country a workers' educational movement – thus he would combine his great experience as a teacher and a historian with his life-long work as an active political personality.

But, alas, this was not to be. Ashraf's work remains incomplete; his great aspiration to see a socialist India unrealised. Those who remain behind, Ashraf's friends and comrades, would honour his memory by trying to complete his work and to realise his noble dream. Thus alone can our terrible grief at the loss of such a dear and valuable comrade be lessened and life conquer death.

S. SAJJAD ZAHEER

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My first recollection of Dr. Ashraf dates back to the spring of 1947. I was in Delhi where I had gone to cover the Inter-Asian Conference for a number of Indian and foreign newspapers and journals. The event was a landmark in Indian and Asian history, though at the time the western press, almost without exception, tried to belittle its significance and largely ignored it. For several decades during India's struggle for freedom, the Indian national movement had repeatedly pledged itself to the task of promoting understanding and co-operation among the nations of Asia – and not only Asia – on the basis of their shared heritage of struggle against colonialism and their common aspirations to national independence and to economic and social progress. The fact that Jawaharlal Nehru, almost immediately on taking charge of India's foreign relations in the "Interim Government" and even before the achievement of independence, had taken the initiative to call such a conference, was seen by the progressive and radical section of Indian opinion as an encouraging augury in itself and as a promise of things to come. Especially so, because it was noted that for the first time representatives from the Asian Republics of the U. S. S. R. had been invited to participate in the work of the conference, thus breaking down that physical and psychological

Plate 7. K. M. Ashraf, London, 1951

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cordon sanitaire which British Imperialism had set up and systematically sustained in order to insulate the people of India from direct contact and dialogue with the Soviet Union.

The plenary sessions of the conference were held under a vast marquee erected inside the Old Fort of Delhi. However, most of the work of committees set up to deal with the various concrete problems of inter-Asian co-operation was done in the Constitution House. What is more, many of the significant and useful encounters among the delegates and journalists and others on the margin of the conference took place in the Lounge of the Constitution House. It was at one of these that I was introduced to Dr. Ashraf. Of course, we had many mutual friends and his work was known to me, both as an historian of originality and distinction and as one of the leading figures among those who constituted the Left-wing of the Indian National Congress and had played an important part in what was known as "the mass-contact campaign", especially among the Muslim voters, during the elections to the provincial assemblies in 1937, which, although held under an imposed imperialist constitution, actually became a trial of strength between British Power in India and its Indian stooges on the one hand, and the national liberation movement on the other. But for some reason we had never actually met till then.

It was, in any case, a brief meeting and we talked mainly about the conference, its work, its limitations and its potentialities as the point of departure for the consolidation of an area of peace and friendship in Asia which would eventually embrace Africa as the nations of Africa won their freedom and sovereignty and entered the mainstream of history. However, even while discussing these hopeful perspectives that were opening up, none of us, least of all Dr. Ashraf who had been in the very thick of the struggle for India's liberation most of his adult life, could overlook the vast menace that was looming ahead because of the sharpening cleavage of policy and purpose between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. We could not have overlooked it even if we had wanted. The fact that the leadership of the Muslim League had boycotted the Inter-Asian Conference and that the newspapers which it controlled had been engaged in a virulent campaign designed to ridicule and denigrate the work of the Conference was a constant reminder of the alienation of the two major political forces in India and of how far the process had gone.

For the next two years or more I had no contact with Dr. Ashraf, direct or indirect. I was actually in Europe when India was partitioned and two separate States were set up on the subcontinent. The traumatic effect of this tragic event it is hard for even sympathetic outsiders to gauge fully. Of course, the death and destruction, the large-scale uprooting of populations, the far-reaching dislocation of the already tenuous and fragile economy which followed in the wake of what was in fact an act of imperialist vandalism, are recorded history by now. But what has not been sufficiently appreciated, and perhaps never will be, is the subtler damage the arbitrary partition inflicted on the structure of Indian polity and culture as it had evolved historically. For it not only opened the floodgates of religious

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chauvinism, but destroyed the delicate balances on which the Indian ethos had rested for centuries. In particular, it was a major set-back for the progressive movement which had fought for the freedom and unity of the Indian people. Freedom, indeed, had come bringing with it for them not the taste of honey, but of Dead Sea fruit.

The tragedy of India's partition affected Dr. Ashraf in a very direct and personal sense. He had gone to West Pakistan only to discover that the authorities in the newly created State were already committed to a policy of systematic persecution of anybody who had ever cherished progressive ideas and been in any way connected with Left-wing, or even mildly radical political activities. He was left in no doubt that his presence in Pakistan would not be tolerated and was imprisoned without trial. The story of this episode in his life I was to hear from him sometime towards the end of 1949 when I met him by chance in London and learnt to my surprise that he was living in Hampstead – and in the same road where I was living at the time, only a few houses away.

It was during the period of his stay in London that I came to know him well. We had fairly frequent opportunities of meeting each other either at my place, or his rooms, or often at the British Museum where he was collecting material for his projected work on the period of Indian history which was his special province – namely, the period which saw the rise, consolidation and decline of Muslim power in India. He was working very hard – perhaps even too hard. The life of an impecunious exile has strains enough in any event; and he was not keeping good health. Nevertheless, he went practically every day to the Museum early in the morning and worked till closing time – 5 o'clock in the afternoon – mostly in the room for Oriental Books and Manuscripts, taking copious notes from the original sources of Indian history. As at the time I was also working on a biography of Rammohun Roy and used to go to the Museum twice or three times a week, we had frequent opportunities to meet.

In fact, there were a number of other Indian writers and scholars working at the Museum during those years; they included the late Cedric Dover whose books on the racial question, published during the late thirties and the war years, represented an important contribution to the fight against the racialist doctrines of Fascism, and the young Urdu poet, Munib-ur-Rahman, who was at the time writing a thesis on the revolutionary trends in Persian poetry during the 19th and 20th centuries; and the British Museum was to us something of a club. Occasionally, we all met for a snack and a cup of tea in a small café in Coptic Street only a few steps away called Phil's Snack Bar which then, as now, was patronised, not by the intelligentsia, or the office workers and shop assistants, but by lorry-drivers and garage hands and others whose proletarian origins could hardly be in doubt.

What did we discuss at these gatherings? Inevitably, the current international situation. For it was a period of acute Cold War tensions. The aftermath of the Korean War was still with us and the colonial war against the people of Viet Nam was threatening to develop into a wider conflict which might have engulfed the

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whole of South East Asia – and perhaps the world – under the pressure of American imperialism in its rabid Dullesian phase. However, the central theme of our talks was what had happened in India and the tragedy of partition which had left such deep wounds in the collective memory of our generation. The question that continued to preoccupy us was how and why the progressive movement in India had failed to prevent what was an avoidable disaster.

A year or so before, I had published an introduction to the life and work of the great Indian poet – Mohammad Iqbal. It was in part concerned with this very question: for Iqbal and his writings had been claimed posthumously as the vindication of the "Two Nations" theory which had furnished the ideological basis for the creation of Pakistan. It was a matter of some gratification to me that Dr. Ashraf, who had a very deep knowledge of the intellectual movements in the world of Indian Islam and had known Iqbal personally, had liked the book and generally endorsed my assessment, not only of Iqbal's poetic genius, but the contradictions and confusions underlying his political ideas – and the reasons for them. I got the impression, too, that the research on which he was engaged was not actuated by purely academic motives, but by his conviction of the imperative need for building a rational framework for the understanding of Indian history. He felt, as many of us did, that over the past hundred years or more, imperialist scholarship had systematically injected a reactionary bias into Indian historical studies to suit the purposes of imperialist strategy of "divide and rule"; that it had deliberately magnified, if not actually invented, divisive features in India's complex social and cultural anatomy, worked upon them as on a raw nerve till they had acquired a pathological acuteness; and that, consequently, it was a major and urgent responsibility facing the forward-looking Indian intelligentsia to devote themselves to the task of formulating an alternative and positive approach to India's past no less than to her present. And this, he felt, could only be done by going to the original sources of Indian history, to verify the facts and to interpret and order them scientifically, and above all to cure its study of the morbidities of denominational partisanship and obsessions which imperialism had succeeded in insinuating into the methods of teaching and exegesis.

Dr. Ashraf's own research work was undertaken with full consciousness of this responsibility and can best be understood in the light of this responsibility. Once he had completed the collection of data, he was most anxious to return to India where he wanted to take up teaching and at the same time to get down to putting his studies into a series of books. But there came the rub. His status in Britain was for all practical purposes that of a stateless person. He was not a citizen of the United Kingdom; and the Indian authorities were reluctant to give him a passport although he had devoted so much of his life to the struggle for Indian freedom. Finally, the British Home Office issued him a pass and he was allowed to return to India, the land of his birth.

I learned that he worked for a time in Kashmir and later took up a teaching post in a college in Delhi. But somehow I missed meeting him during my trip to India in the summer of 1957. Strange to relate my next and last meeting with him

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was to be in East Berlin in March 1961 when I was visiting the German Democratic Republic on the invitation of the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the G. D. R. Some friends informed me that Dr. Ashraf had come to Berlin to take up work at the Institute of Indology as Guest-Professor in medieval history and it was arranged that we should spend an evening together. I recall that when we met and had dinner together at a lively restaurant not far from where he was staying, he talked at length of how he had managed to bring his favourite cat all the way from India to Berlin and how he managed to persuade the authorities both at the airport in Moscow and Berlin to waive the stringent quarantine regulations to let her in. It was a happy evening that we spent together and the idea that I was never to see him again did not enter my mind even as a remote premonition.

The orbits of our two lives intersected at so few points and ran close to each other over so brief a stretch of time that it would be presumptuous for me to claim that these reminiscences can qualify in any material sense to be considered as making a significant contribution to an understanding of Dr. Ashraf's life and work. Nor are they intended as such. The only biographical purpose they may conceivably serve is that in the larger canvas these impressions may fill in some details about a period of his life which was not only one of great strain and difficulty, but during which he was living away from most of his lifelong friends and comrades.

Not that at any time during his adult life he could command even moderate comfort or ease. Like most men and women of his generation and persuasion in India, his youth and early middle-age were entirely dedicated to the struggle for Indian liberation and to the even sterner task of investing the movement of emancipation with a truly socialist meaning and content. This inevitably involved renunciation of all private ambition and even of private life. But during the 'thirties and the 'forties, when the struggle against imperialism was approaching its climax, these hardships and privations were in a sense easier to bear, because of the sustaining comfort of comradeship in a common endeavour with thousands of others which made all the difference.

There was no such sustaining comfort for his spirit during the last few years of his life – and least of all during the time that he spent in London. On the contrary, just when he could reasonably have expected somewhat more tolerable and normal conditions under which to devote himself to the creative academic pursuits for which his immense scholarship and intellectual gifts so eminently qualified him, he was subjected to an even severer test. He had hardly any means of livelihood and found himself wholly isolated and almost without a country. And this at a time when his health was also failing.

It would be idle to pretend that all this did not impose certain handicaps on his work, inhibiting the effective scope of his achievement. For so to pretend would be to ignore or slur over the stultifying limitations to which intellectuals and scholars who do not accept the primacy of the cash nexus on which capitalist societies rest,

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are subjected despite tall talk of "liberalism" and "freedom". But having recorded this, it is also important to set down that although he worked under the most frustrating conditions, he never allowed himself to be deflected from his loyalty to all the progressive causes of our times; that to the end of his days the miseries and injustices of the world were always more real and urgent to him than his own private misery or grief. At least, those of us who had the good fortune to come in contact with him during this period will always owe him a great debt of gratitude for his never failing friendship, his stimulating comradeship and his great charity and courtesy of the spirit. And not only for these, but much else besides . . .

IQBAL SINGH

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My first acquaintance with Dr. Ashraf was in 1936.

The Indian National Congress was holding its annual session at Lucknow. Those of us who had accepted the ideology of socialism and had organized ourselves inthe Congress Socialist Party were busy contacting the delegates who gathered at Lucknow from all parts of the country. Many who were not members of the Congress Socialist Party but were holding views of a generally left and socialist persuasion were gathered in considerable numbers. The fact that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the avowed champion of a leftist orientation of the Congress, was the President of the session raised the morale of all such left-minded delegates.

Plate 8. K. M. Ashraf,
original pen and ink sketch, 1935

The Communist Party at that time was a relatively small force but included in its ranks revolutionaries who were respected for their sincerity of purpose and capacity for tireless work. Many of us in the Congress Socialist Party were in contact with them and, like me, being attracted towards the Party. We began to hope for an era of close co-operation between them and us of the Congress Socialist Party.

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One of the revolutionaries who were known to us all as a Communist was Dr. Ashraf. He had just come back from studies in England and had earned a reputation as a young revolutionary of high intellectual calibre. He threw himself heart and soul into the anti-imperialist movement and actively worked to strengthen it. He became a pillar of strength for the entire left and socialist movement. The President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, took him into the staff of the All India Congress Committee and gave him and a few other young intellectuals the task of strengthening the ideological work of the Congress. He therefore began to work untiringly to give the ideological and organizational work of the Congress a distinctly rabid anti-imperialist outlook.

Along with this work in the general anti-imperialist movement, Dr. Ashraf worked in the Congress Socialist Party and in the organization of the Communist Party of India. He was soon elected as a member of the National Executive of the Congress Socialist Party of which I was a member. I had, in the meanwhile, joined the Communist Party of India. We therefore became colleagues both in the C. S. P. Executive and the organization of the Communist Party.

Ever since then and down to the last days when he was leaving for Berlin, I had the opportunity to work with him in the Communist Party. I have always been impressed by the earnestness with which he carried on the revolutionary work assigned to him as well as the erudition which he brought to bear on his practical work. All his colleagues and comrades respect him for the rare combination which they see in him of the erudite scholar and the practical revolutionary. I had also had the pleasure of seeing how his colleagues in academic circles respected him for the scholarly work which he had done.

It was therefore a terrible shock to me as to all his comrades and co-workers, when I heard the news of his sudden death.

E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

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It was in 1939/40 that I became acquainted indirectly with Dr. Ashraf. His only short story *Anand* about those young boys who left their colleges and joined the independence movement in 1921/22, wa published in *Adabi Dunya*. After the events of Chauri Chaura when Gandhiji withdrew the movement, the only task left to them was to sit in the Ashrams spinning and listening to the *upadeša* of the Gita. So their lives were wasted in confusion and in worry. At the end of the story, disgusted by this mental conflict, a young man committed suicide.

I liked the story and came to the conclusion that Anandi's suicide was the result of wrong leadership and wrong education. I think it was the first and the last story by Dr. Ashraf, who told me later on that it was based on an incident from real life.

Afterwards, perhaps in 1946, he came to Lahore and gave a lecture in the Y. M. C. A. Hall on Shibli. Lahore was at that time a centre of the new culture. Many writers and intellectuals attended the meeting. Everyone liked the speech by Doctor Saheb. Referring to the writings of Shibli he analysed the rising political and literary consciousness of that time.

The partition of the country and the exchange of populations took place. I had to leave Lahore and had to come to Delhi. Here the Communist Party started a daily newspaper called "Naya Daur" which came out from January, 1948. The preparations had already started in December, 1947. Dr. Ashraf was the editor of the paper. Comrade Tika Ram Sukhan was brought in from the Punjab; his task was to assist Dr. Ashraf in writing the editorial notes and in looking after the paper. I was the news editor. Comrade Yushal was the manager.

The office of the paper was at Connaught Place, but we were staying at Urdu Bazaar, near Jama Masjid. There in Koocha Khonkhana is a big building, "Akbar Manzil". Its former inhabitants had gone to Pakistan due to the riots. This building became a commune for those of us who were working on the newspaper.

There were about 10 to 12 rooms altogether, and people were living together with one another. A separate room was reserved for Dr. Ashraf on the upper floor, so that he could have the facility of studying and could talk separately with his visitors.

But Doctor Saheb never considered it his own room. He used to live in common with everybody. Sometimes he came and sat in the nearby room and we went to his room. When he went out he never locked it, the doors remained open. Not

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only was the room free to all, but his comrades who were living with him could use his things as their own. He never complained. He used to take food with all the others, and in his talk he never showed any kind of superiority or egoism.

He was very much perturbed because of the riots. The topic of our talks was often the same. Our minds had not accepted the division of the country. Then came the theory of the two nations, transfer of population, murders and destruction – nothing could be understood.

One day Doctor Saheb said:

"But shall the Hindus and Muslims deny historical realities by this? Shall not this Red Fort, Jama Masjid and Taj Mahal remain the cultural heritage of the Muslims who are going to Pakistan? Can Hindus change their names and send them to Pakistan? There are hundreds of other things which are witness to our common culture. Will this culture also be divided by the partition of the country? No, no, certainly not. All this is madness."

Dr. Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf belonged to a Rajput family. Some members of this family were Muslims and some were Hindus and they maintained their relations among them all.

But it was a time when nobody listened to others. There was an atmosphere of madness and fear everywhere. Lakhs of Hindus had come to Delhi from West Pakistan and the Frontier. These, in addition to those in the camps, lay in the streets, in the parks, mosques, temples etc. It was a difficult problem to rehabilitate them and to give them employment. Moreover the lives of the Muslims living in Delhi were in danger. Many people had gone to the camp at Humayun's Tomb. For those who remained in their houses it was difficult to come out of the Muslim *mohallas*, not to mention the position in Pahar Ganj, Karol Bagh and Sabzi Mandi. Life was in danger even when going to Chandni Chawk. Communalism had poisoned the minds of the people. Nobody was ready to hear a word of love.

The Communist Party was helping the Congress and the Government to solve the problems which had come up due to the riots and to create a healthier atmosphere. The Party therefore announced a public meeting in this connection. Probably it was the first political meeting after partition to be held on Gandhi Ground. Dr. Ashraf was the speaker. We were sure that the meeting would be successful, for the people acknowledged his powerful rhetoric and his patriotism.

There was a large audience. Coming onto the stage Doctor Saheb began his speech in a serious tone. But as soon as he opened fire on communalism and the reactionaries, people began murmuring. The area around Gandhi Ground was the centre of the members of Rashtrya Sewam Sewak Sangh. They exercised a strong influence on the local Hindus and particularly the refugees. How could they tolerate that a Mohammedan who was a Communist as well, should come to their centre, where it was dangerous for any Muslim to enter, teach them about nationalism and preach that all ought to live in cooperation with each other?

They resorted to hooliganism.

But Doctor Saheb was not the least perturbed. He continued his speech calmly. He was accustomed to face hooliganism even from the time of the "People's War".

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In spite of the shouting of his opponents he used to put his point of view with courage in the sessions of the All India Congress Committee. He would not be made nervous by this hooliganism now. Yet the time was such that even Doctor Saheb's rhetoric and popularity did not help. Communalism played its game and disturbed the meeting. We were not unaware of the situation. We had therefore come prepared and brought Doctor Saheb safely away from the meeting place. Otherwise it was possible that he might have fallen a victim to communalism simply because his name was "Mohammad Ashraf".

HANSRAJ RAHBAR

(*Awami Daur Weekly*, New Delhi, 15th July, 1962, abridged in translation)

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Plate 9. K. M. Ashraf at Lahore, 1937

I first heard Dr. Ashraf's name in the years before the Second World War when I was studying in England. With my contemporaries I was active in the anti-imperialist movement. The Bombay weekly "National Front" and others circulated from hand to hand among us expatriates, bringing news from India which we eagerly devoured.

Ashraf's name stood with those of the late Sahibzada Mahmuduzzaffar, the late Dr. Rashid Jean Begum, the late Mian Iftikharuddin, S. Sajjad Zaheer, Hajrah Begum and others, the leaders of the brilliant young Muslim intelligentsia (highly qualified and belonging to socially prominent families) that stood with the integral Indian national movement opposed to Muslim separatism.

Ashraf was a leading champion of Hindu-Muslim unity against Imperialism. He himself sprang from a famous Rajput warrior clan, which from the days of the great Emperor Akbar, had been divided between the Hindu and Muslim faiths but had preserved the tradition and custom, down to our days, of intermarriage (both Hindu bride with Muslim groom and *vice versa*).

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Ashraf was rated among India's best orators. I had experience of his ability shortly after my return to India in 1939. I was then working as Secretary to Mian Iftikharuddin, President of the Punjab Congress. The national leader, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, came to Lahore and we had to arrange his tour programme throughout the Punjab Province (of which Lahore was then the capital). As usual Pandit Nehru's programme was a very full one with innumerable mass meetings. Unfortunately one night when a big mass meeting was scheduled at Lahore, due to some misunderstanding forty miles away at Amritsar the local Trade Unions had also called a meeting for Pandit Nehru. It was impossible for Panditji to address both meetings on the same night. Crowds of over 100,000 had assembled at both places. They would not disperse unless Pandit Nehru appeared in person to address them. Hastily Ashraf was sent in a fast car to Amritsar. Under the spell of his oratory the crowd relaxed, chuckled (as only he could make them chuckle!) . . . at last forgot that they had met to hear Nehru. After Ashraf's speech lasting two and a half hours, during which he gained and held rapt attention, the crowd dispersed without a murmur of complaint that it had been cheated of the scheduled speech by Pandit Nehru.

Dr. Ashraf was a revolutionary. He rejected the bourgeois path to national liberation. His speeches and writings were devoted to the solidarity of the Hindu and Muslim toilers and to the organization of the workers and peasants.

Some of Ashraf's greatest speeches were made in the great days of February 1946 – when the naval Mutiny at Bombay cracked and shook the British Empire in India. Mass meetings and demonstrations throughout the length and breadth of the land thundered solidarity with the mutineers. The British regime was powerless to stop it. The Army became restive in sympathy with the mutineers. The Railwaymen and Post-and-Telegraph workers seethed. India was aflame. For the first time since the Great War of Independence of 1857, Indian armed forces had levelled guns at the British. It was seen that the flags hoisted by the naval ships in mutiny were triple – the Red Flag with the Congress Tricolor and the Muslim Green. A rightist leader called this "an unholy alliance of Hindus and Muslims".

It is nowadays fashionable to discount the contribution to India's liberation of revolutionary action. A "change of heart by the British rulers" under the gentle sun of non-violence is said to have been the cause of India's becoming free in 1947.

In this context it is pertinent to cite the opinion of an accredited leader of Western Imperialism. According to John Foster Dulles, at this period of history, when the fighting in World War II drew to a close, "If the West had attempted to perpetuate the status quo of colonialism, it would have made violent revolution inevitable and defeat inevitable"[1] for the West. The leading rôle of the Red Flag in the Indian naval uprising was not unnoticed by the West. A policy of "quickly granting independence" was imperative, says Dulles, to peoples who "otherwise would have fought for it in alliance with Soviet Communism"[2].

[1] J. F. Dulles, *War or Peace*, New York, 1957, p. 76.
[2] Ibid., p. 147.

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It is ironical that the retreat of British imperialism, by "quickly granting independence" was coupled with a manoeuvre (similar to that adopted by the West in Germany, and recently again in the Congo) of dividing the country and, with a powerful propaganda offensive, confusing the people. A leading patriot like Dr. K. M. Ashraf, former Secretary of the All India Congress Party, was placed in peril of his liberty and even of his citizenship. Some had fought and bled for freedom while others had stolen to power.

All freedom loving Indians must be profoundly grateful to the authorities of the Humboldt University at Berlin, whose enlightened and generous decision enabled Dr. K. M. Ashraf to spend his last years at Berlin as a Guest Professor, reading Mediaeval Indian History. His work could not be other than a contribution to the cause of human liberation and advancement that he held so dear.

A day will come when all the people of India will learn to honour the memory of our finest patriots and revolutionaries. Among these the name of Dr. Ashraf will be remembered and will stand high.

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I first met Dr. Ashraf in the early forties. He had come to Delhi to participate in a symposium on "Dr. Iqbal as a fascist". His contribution to the discussion was so outstanding that after the meeting I walked up to him for a brief conversation. He was so polite and charming that I felt compelled to call on him a second time during his stay in Delhi. We talked of Urdu poetry and the communal problem in India. I already knew his views on the communal problem and yet I had never heard them expressed so strongly and so refreshingly. But what came as a real revelation to me was his knowledge of and love for literature. His easy familiarity with Urdu and Persian poetry was simply amazing. It was much later that I discovered that he was in his own right a man of letters. Many people perhaps do not know that he wrote plays and features. One of these was so outstanding (on the life of Mirza Ghalib) that it became a real sensation when the B.B.C. broadcast a portion of it in its Indian/Pakistani programme. The late Dr. Abdul Haq, the famous Urdu scholar, wrote from Karachi asking Dr. Ashraf to supply him with the manuscript of this piece and seeking his permission to publish it. I do not know

Plate 10. K. M. Ashraf, Delhi, 1959

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whether it was ever published. I also do not know what happened to a translation of *Macbeth* on which he was engaged during his stay in London.[1]

I met Dr. Ashraf again after about a decade when I went to London. It was in London that I came to know him most intimately. It was also there that I met Mrs. Ashraf who is a remarkable woman herself. Some of the pleasantest time that I spent in London was in the company of Dr. and Mrs. Ashraf. A time came when we were almost everyday together for hours. Often I would visit them at their small flat near Hampstead Heath. Dr. Ashraf and I would talk of Rajputs and Jats and Mrs. Ashraf of what fools we were! And she is so affectionate and hospitable that she would never let me come without sharing the meal that she had prepared so lovingly for her husband. I have often felt that my education in London would have remained incomplete if I had not come in contact with Dr. and Mrs. Ashraf.

Dr. Ashraf's stay in London was very hard in various ways. There were days when he would go without lunch. Also he would insist on working in the British Museum from 9 a. m. – its opening time – to 5 p. m. when it closed. He was collecting material from original Persian and other sources to write a proper History of India. All this work, combined with lack of proper nourishment – and the anguish that he suffered owing to his country having disowned him – told on his health and there was a serious illness from which he recovered considerably damaged. Mrs. Ashraf was fighting a real battle – she is a remarkably brave woman. She had in fact made it a mission of her life to look after him and his comforts. She did whatever was humanly possible but one thing was very clear to all Dr. Ashraf's friends and well-wishers: that he would no more be able to stand the rough and tumble of active politics. I once or twice suggested that Dr. Ashraf should join the academic profession. But there was the primary problem of a passport to India!

Dr. Ashraf loved India as only he could love it. The mere mention of "home" would give him a pang. I saw him suffer as only a banished man can suffer. I place on record the painful fact that almost all his political associates – both friends and foes – did grave injustice to this man. He was essentially a scholar and an idealist. In spite of all his sophistication and achievements in politics, he had the heart of a child – affectionate, even sentimental, and intensely human. If I have seen a politician who could never really hate a human being, it was Ashraf. My political views were often in disagreement with his and yet I am not likely to receive from anyone the love and affection I got from him. His love for my children was so deep and powerful that a stage came when he would visit them every day and in fact he became so friendly with each one of them that often my wife and I had to remind him that he was spoiling them! I often wondered at his tremendous capacity for love and affection.

It is not easy for me to talk of Dr. Ashraf's stay at Kirori Mal College. He was not merely an outstanding historian and a remarkable teacher: he was for us a real event. Within a few weeks of his arrival in Delhi a fresh breeze started blowing

[1] This was also broadcast from London as a radio play [P. M. A.].

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in the study of Medieval Indian History in the University of Delhi. He became the centre of a real creative movement. Students and teachers clustered round him and Kirori Mal College came to be known almost throughout the country as Ashraf's College. We all basked in the sunshine of his friendship – I as Principal more perhaps than others. For me he got to be more than a friend: he became a real brother. I depended on him for advice and guidance and we both achieved what could perhaps be described in the circumstances as an ideal solution of many problems. There were occasions when we discovered that our stand was not appreciated by "the authorities" but he was not only brave himself but was the cause of bravery in others. He was a real leader of men and he showed more than once in our small academic world that courage of conviction is needed as much here as anywhere else. He was an ideal teacher in Indian conditions largely because he was a man of courage. In him alone I found a perfect combination of character and knowledge. I do not know whether I could have prevented his leaving Kirori Mal College but I shall not forgive myself for having been away from the College when it happened. He is utterly irreplaceable. Politicians may say the same: but when it comes from a teacher, it has a more genuinely painful ring. Our staff-lounge is no more the same; gone are those guffaws and those knowing smiles. Our Holi is not going to be the same any more: he was always our first target on that day. And on all other occasions how we shall miss him! He placed Kirori Mal College not merely on the map of India: he has done very much more. Through him we are a part of history.

Only a few days before his death, I wrote to him telling him that I had returned to the College but that without him the College was no more the same, that in fact I felt lost without him. I also warned him that we should not relapse into mere acquaintances. This is what he wrote on the 30th of May, 1962: "It was ever so sweet of you to have written this personal and affectionate letter along with the P. F. receipt. Need I tell you that after knowing you in London, you could never again be just an acquaintance or a friend in the conventional sense of the term, but only a brother – to use the tribal idiom – a kin. I do regard your home and family as mine and next time when I come to Delhi you will find me with you and Sheila". About leaving the college he said: "I certainly did not want to leave the College – I thought I was there for the rest of my life – but . . . went out of his way to tell me that he was not willing to extend my term . . . Dr. Prasad was really kind and appointed me to Saran's job and the Vice-Chancellor of Jaipur offered a Professorship in the Department of History but somehow, I was reminded of Ghalib and came away:

جب میکدہ چھٹا تو پھر اب کیا جگہ کی قید
مسجد ہو مدرسہ ہو کوئی خانقاہ ہو[2]

About his work in Berlin University he said: "As Professor in Berlin University I feel in the midst of real and fruitful academic life. I am working on a problem for

[2] "When I have been driven out of the Tavern, what does it matter where I sit and drink? It may be a Mosque, a Madrasa or a Shrine."

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which there are no materials in India or even in London – the early history of Turkish and Mongol tribes". About his returning to India he said: "I have not yet decided when I return to India or what I do when I return. I feel like returning to Party educational Work; Parliamentary Politics just repels me". After sending his affection and regards for a dozen of his colleagues in the college, he said: "How the College almost haunts me". The letter ended on a deeply tender note which included references to my father, my wife and children. I quote the last sentence which seems to contain almost a premonition of his approaching end: "Thus little is left for me to offer you – except my prayers for your happy future and successful present but this is from the bottom of my heart". This was Dr. Ashraf – warm, affectionate and tender. And this man had passed through the hardening and coarsening process of Indian politics. The country, of course, has lost a great man but only his friends know what they have lost.

I conclude with the words which Shakespeare has used about another idealist in politics:

"His life was gentle; and the elements
So mix'd in him that nature might stand up,
And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'"

SARUP SINGH

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A high official of Delhi University (who was also an anti-Communist) said one day to Dr. Ashraf:

"Ashraf, I have heard that you are a communist?"

"Quite wrong. I am a party member". Ashraf replied.

"What do you mean?" he again asked.

"I mean that I only consider someone who is member of the Communist Party to be a communist. I do not consider any communist outside the party a communist." This was the reply of Dr. Ashraf. After this that gentleman did not trouble him with any more questions.

In 1957, at the centenary celebration of 1857, in the Town Hall of Delhi Dr. Ashraf said in his speech:

,,It is surprising that every one calls and considers himself either Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian. Nobody is heard to say 'I am Hindustani'. Not only this, but everyone has separate Festivals. There is no common festival. When the *Kumbh* Fair comes, lakhs of people go there only because they are Hindus and die in thousands. Not only this, but in Pakistan also a new definition of Islam is given that declares joint elections non-Islamic and Islam therefore in danger. I do not know where to place such an Islam which is in danger of breaking down through joint elections. We need a common culture. A culture in which religion does not interfere. Human beings should meet each other on a human basis and celebrate festivals. Naturally such festivals can only be national and international festivals."

I shall never forget the days of 1959 when the preparations for the annual meeting of the Almora Students' Federation were at their height. The name of Dr. Ashraf, who had to inaugurate the programme, was on everybody's lips. Boys and girls from the schools and colleges were moving around the city and collecting funds. This programme spread through the city from a small room in a hotel. Somewhere handbills were being written and somewhere small flags were being prepared. Thus the whole city was preparing to observe a festival. Everyone was confidently busy in his work. People had various remarks on their lips:

"Dr. Ashraf! Oh, that Kanpur fellow, who had a clash with Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari."

"Dr. Ashraf! The one who came from Pakistan and was saved from the conspiratorial hands of Liaqat Ali."

"Dr. Ashraf! He who was publishing 'Naya Daur'."

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"Dr. Ashraf! Oh, that prisoner in Deoli camp."

"Dr. Ashraf! Whom the military officers brought out safe from Darya Ganj during the Delhi riots."

"Dr. Ashraf! That Professor Ashraf on whose account Kirori Mal College got nicknamed Karl Marx College."

Thus many tongues made many discoveries. The whole city was waiting for him.

At last the evening came. Hundreds of young boys and girls, political workers, social workers, professors, literary personalities, doctors and other people were present at the 'bus station. Dr. Ashraf got down from the 'bus and the slogans "Long live the revolution! Long live Dr. Ashraf!" were raised and produced a sweet echo in the surrounding hills. A lot of garlands were hung round his neck. Hundreds of persons had the pleasure of shaking hands with him. A procession marched up to the Dak Bungalow. People were peering from their windows along the street. This procession was not for a capitalist leader, it was a real proletarian procession. Dr. Ashraf was shaking hands with people and waves of smiles and laughter passed over his lips. The procession ended on reaching the Dak Bungalow. The people departed and only the organizers stayed there.

The inauguration of the meeting took place. Such a meeting had never been held in the history of Almora. The big leaders of the country, too, never had the pleasure of addressing such a big gathering. Dr. Ashraf began with a reference to the song which the young boys had sung before his speech. He spoke as an old congressman. He spoke about the problems of the students, Indian politics, the struggle for bread and employment of the youth. Thus he spoke on all sorts of national and international problems.

After the speech the cultural programme began. Meanwhile some sectarians and reactionaries tried to make mischief. From behind the wall of the college they threw stones which hit Dr. Ashraf and some women. Volunteers rushed towards the wall in anger but Dr. Ashraf stopped them.

"This is nothing, my children. These are people of the stone age. They are trying to amuse themselves."

I don't know what magic was in those words that stopped the volunteers. One of them could not tolerate it and asked:

"Is it gentleness to tolerate cruelty? Why should it not be crushed by force?"

Dr. Ashraf replied, laughing, "Dear! Have you not read Jigar: 'An attack which is not full is an insult to the hands.'"

On the next day several intellectuals surrounded him at his residence. Eight or ten persons sat in the room. Behind Dr. Ashraf were the hills of Kumayun and behind these were the Himalayas covered with snow. People asked many questions. Dr. Ashraf gave the answers to all sorts of political, social, literary, historical and economic questions. His words and arguments clashed with the ignorance and doubts of those who heard him. It seemed as though the mental level of Dr. Ashraf towered above the others like the Himalayas over the hills outside the room. All seemed flat before his personality.

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One interesting and important effect of his speech was that neutrals disappeared from Almora. There was only the camp of progressives which supported national independence, equality, prosperity, international friendship and peace. The other camp was that of sectarianism and communalism.

AZAD BHAWALPURI

(Translated from *Awami Daur Weekly*, New Delhi, 22nd July 1962)

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Dr. Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf loved his country and its people with the devotion of a peasant to his plot of land and his family. He was born in an impoverished semi-tribal, semi-peasant community known for its martial qualities – his life was a long struggle against poverty and exploitation. Uncompromising in his opposition to imperialism and its feudal allies, he joined the ranks of the fighters for national freedom at an early age. In singleness of purpose he possessed the spirit of ancient crusaders. Ever since he came in contact with the working class movement as a student in England, he devoted himself heart and soul to the cause of the liberation of the toiling people, to the cause of socialism.

His main contribution to the national movement was his relentless campaign against the religious-revivalist and obscurantist ideas which were the main instrument of reactionary and communalist forces in their attempt to disrupt the unity of the Indian people. Well-versed in religious literature and a scholar of history, he was a powerful speaker and could hold his own among the theologians and learned spokesmen of reactionary ideologies as easily as he could keep huge audiences of working people spellbound. His biting sarcasms and slashing polemics – of which he was a master – made him the most feared opponent of communalist reactionaries.

Ashraf was known for his outspokenness. When he disagreed with anyone he did not hesitate to give expression to his views. He did not spare even those whom he loved and respected, for according to him, no friendship was more sacred than what one considered to be right. He held Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad in high regard and entertained feelings of devotion towards them. He had worked as a director of the Muslim Mass Contact Department of the All India Congress Committee under Jawaharlal Nehru, and had acted as private secretary to Maulana Azad in the earlier phase of Maulana's second term of Congress Presidentship. But there were occasions when he found it necessary to criticise these great leaders, and in doing so he did not mince words. If they continued to shower their affection on him, it was because they were aware of his qualities of head and heart.

If by his outspokenness he made many an enemy, he won many more friends and admirers by his sincerity of purpose and honesty of conviction. Ashraf was essentially an intellectual. But he never made a show of his learning. If he found he was wrong he would gracefully accept his mistake. Even the juniormost among his co-workers could go to him and point out his mistakes. He hated snobbery as

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much as he detested hypocrisy and took almost malicious pleasure in cutting down to size those who assumed airs before him. In the company of his junior comrades and workers at lower levels he behaved with extreme humility, putting across his point of view in the language they could understand and in terms of their own experience. This was one of the reasons for his popularity with the rank and file of the national movement.

He has written admiringly of those "men of letters and academic tastes (who) exchanged their pens for swords and left the seclusion of seminaries for battle-grounds in the holy war for freedom". In his life he left the classroom many a time to take up political responsibilities.

Men of Ashraf's calibre are becoming rare these days. The quest for knowledge usually leads men with scholarly interests to the ivory tower with its bewitching silence, its aloofness from all that is ugly and contemptible in life. Occasionally, however, he realises that beauty and truth consist in overcoming ugliness and evil and that men of courage should not succumb to the desire to escape. But Ashraf never stayed away from the scene of action for long.

On his return from the G. D. R., after completing the book on which he was working, he intended to devote himself entirely to the working class movement. In his death the working people of India have lost a good friend and guide.

ARUNA ASAF ALI

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I well remember the day, towards the end of 1957, when I met Professor Dr. Ashraf at Delhi for the first time. We talked about the situation in Indian historiography and about my intention of utilizing my stay in India to study some problems of modern Indian history. From the very beginning of our conversation I was

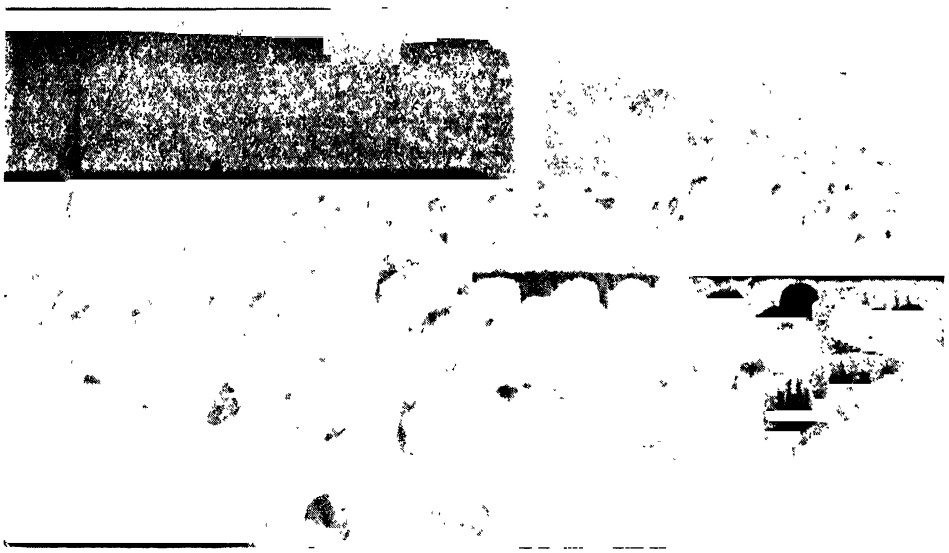

Plate 11. Inauguration of the national memorial at Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp near Berlin, April 1961. K. M. Ashraf in foreground talking with Jan Pec, former Councillor in the Czechoslowakian Embassy, New Delhi, one of the survivors of the Concentration Camp

deeply impressed by Dr. Ashraf's sincerity which he showed when answering my questions, his wide knowledge being an inexhaustible reservoir which he was always ready to share with others. Apart from this I was struck by his modesty and simplicity, which, inspired by a genuine heartiness, made his company pleasant and his friendship valuable.

Out of our first meeting permanent friendly relations developed which were firmly based on our common interest in Indian history. Dr. Ashraf was not simply

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my *guru* but at the same time the living and inspiring example of the Indian people's struggle for freedom and a better life.

And then the day came. At the beginning of December 1960, Dr. and Mrs. P. M. Ashraf were sitting in our living-room in Berlin, where the Humboldt University had appointed him as a Guest-Professor of Medieval Indian History at the Institute of Indology. Both had arrived already in November, but due to my stay at a health-resort during that month we were only now able to meet.

The arrival of Dr. Ashraf coincided with the celebrations which were held on the occasion of the 150 years jubilee of the Berlin Humboldt University. Apart from many other meetings and seminars where scientists and scholars from the German Democratic Republic and abroad gathered for learned discussion, a conference on "The national awakening of the peoples of Asia and Africa and the tasks of orientology" was held in the University from 9th to 11th of November, 1960. Although he had only just arrived, Dr. Ashraf attended this conference, not merely listening but actively participating. The topic of his lecture, which was given without any written preparation, belonged to one of Dr. Ashraf's less known fields of interest – the realm of literature. Unfortunately no notes were taken of this lecture on "Anti-imperialist traditions in Urdu literature" which was presented in a brilliant speech and listened to with great interest by the audience.

With great enthusiasm he concentrated on the teaching work at the Institute of Indology. He lectured here on the history of feudalism in India. This subject was for the first time read systematically at a German University. Parallel to this lecture Dr. Ashraf held a seminar on problems of social conditions in the period of feudalism in India. The students and post-graduates attending those lessons will never forget the scholar and teacher Dr. Ashraf who was distinguished by his superior knowledge of the subject and by his high qualifications as a teacher. His lectures were made especially interesting and memorable by the great number of examples and quotations from original sources which he was able to give.

Apart from his regular classes, Dr. Ashraf gave a series of lectures for a broader audience on "The Muslim question in Indian politics", which was a special subject of his. Probably no one else was so well qualified by such intensive study and practical experience in the national freedom movement to deal with this theme in a scholarly way.[1]

But Dr. Ashraf was not satisfied with his teaching work alone, for he participated with great interest in the discussions in the Institute about the content and aims of indology in our country.

Naturally his towering personality very soon became the focus of the Indian citizens, especially the Indian post-graduates and students, living in the German Democratic Republic. How much time and energy did he spend in order to advise his young countrymen, to settle differences and to strengthen the unity of their

[1] It should be mentioned here that the articles on this subject written by the late Prof. Dr. K. M. Ashraf for "Awami Daur" have been republished by Sajjad Zaheer under the title "A Survey of the Policy of the Indian Muslims", New Delhi, 1963 (Urdu).

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association of which he was the elected President. On Indian national holidays, for instance on Republic Day, Dr. Ashraf was the speaker on behalf of the Indians in this country at the functions arranged together with the "German-South East Asian Society in the German Democratic Republic".

A few weeks after his arrival at Berlin, K. M. Ashraf accepted the invitation of the Indian History Congress whose members had elected him unanimously at the previous session at Gauhati in 1959 to act as President of the Medieval Section at the next session held at Aligarh in December, 1960. Here where he had lived as a student and later as a lecturer for a short period, for the last time in India he had an opportunity to expound his philosophy of history based on historical materialism, and to discuss problems of research and interpretation of Indian feudalism in his very learned and impressive presidential address.[2]

After returning from India Dr. Ashraf resumed his teaching work and research. If he was not busy at the Institute or sitting at his desk at home, he was most certainly to be found in the reading-room of the Oriental Department of the German State Library where he read and made excerpts from Persian manuscripts preserved in German libraries.

From July to December, 1961, Dr. and Mrs. Ashraf went to Soviet Russia on a long-standing invitation from the Institute of the Peoples of Asia of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union. Moscow and Tashkent were to be the main centres of his stay there to which K. M. Ashraf was looking forward with great expectations. This was not only because he knew that he would meet his Russian colleagues and would be able to collect new material in the libraries of Soviet Russia, but he was also very happy to have the opportunity of seeing the country where the October Socialist Revolution had ushered in a new epoch also for the peoples of India.

His studies in the Soviet Union helped Dr. Ashraf to formulate his theory about the influence of nomadic peoples of Central Asia on the development of feudalism in India. He was of the opinion that the invasions of these peoples had contributed in a decisive way to the specific features of Indian feudalism. The invasions of the Huns prevented the full development of feudal conditions in India and pushed them back to the stage of a less developed tribal feudalism.[3] In order to come to further conclusions about the nature of the later invasions, Dr. Ashraf studied many manuscripts at the library of the Academy of Sciences at Tashkent. He even thought of learning Turkish in order to be able to study the original sources in this language.

The treasures of the manuscript collections at Tashkent and the generous offer of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan to continue his studies there for a longer period, made Dr. Ashraf think of the possibility of staying at Tashkent for some time longer, but this possibility was frustrated by an event which happened in Europe, in Berlin. On the 13th of August, 1961, the Government of the German Democratic Republic ordered the closure of the hitherto open frontier with West

[2] Reprinted in this volume, pp. 403–411.

[3] Vide the Presidential Address, p. 409.

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Berlin. This measure stopped the illegal economic exploitation of the German Democratic Republic by West German monopolists, prevented the realization of the plans for aggression on the part of the West German militarists, and made plain the real situation in Germany. When K. M. Ashraf learned this news, he reacted as a true internationalist and friend of the German Democratic Republic. Saying "Now I cannot leave my Berlin friends in the lurch! Now I am needed there, for the fighting line is now in Berlin!", he decided to return to Berlin by the appointed date.

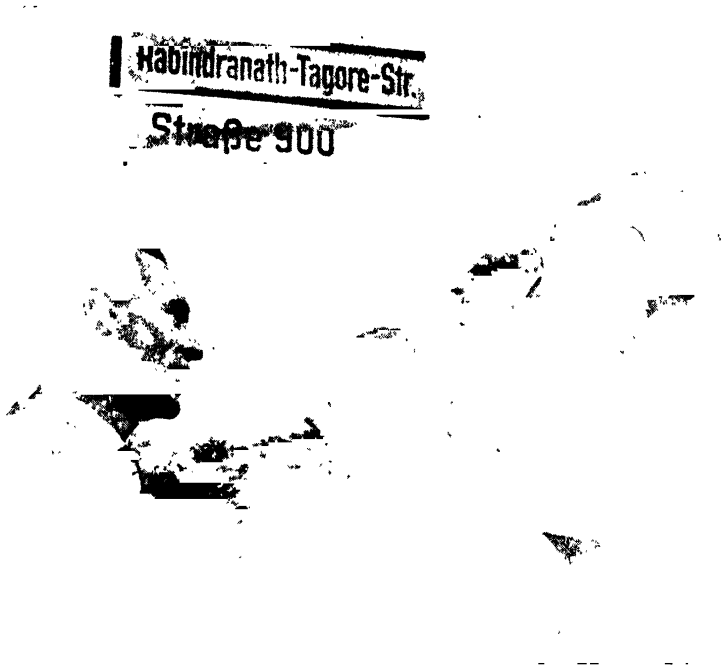

Plate 12. K. M. Ashraf with Professor Dr. W. Ruben (right) at the renaming of a street in Berlin after Rabindranath Tagore, May 1961

With new impressions and rich materials, Dr. Ashraf returned to Berlin at the end of 1961. He started preparations in order to write a book about the influence of nomadic peoples of Central Asia on the development of feudalism in India. But his interest was not limited to this problem. The economic, political and cultural history of the Rajputs was a subject which he liked to tackle again and again. He was very much interested in problems of the history of culture; for instance the development of the culture of the ruling class during the Sultanate and the Mughal period; the reflection of the conception of morals and life in the contemporary literature of these periods, and the development of Urdu literature down to the

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present day. In addition to these subjects he was collecting material for topics such as the customs, habits, rituals and festivals in Islam and their modification in India, i. e. their mixture with elements of Hinduism or Buddhism according to geographical situation, or tales and legends about the prophet Mohammed and their Indian forms.

Dr. Ashraf did not study the history of feudalism in India only for academic ends. Again and again he put the question why no bourgeois revolution had taken place in India; why the Indian bourgeoisie developed so late, and why there had been such strong links with feudalism. He was hoping to be able to answer these questions largely through his studies of the specific features of feudal conditions in India. For him the demand that the investigation of the past should help us to understand and to solve the problems of today went without saying. Assisted by his close connection with political life, he was always trying to apply his knowledge of feudal India to the problems of modern India.

A new, fertile period of Dr. Ashraf's life seemed to have opened. He was going to write the book on the nomadic invasions. At the same time the repeated efforts of his friends to induce him to write his own autobiography proved successful. At the beginning of May, 1962, Dr. Ashraf told me that he was collecting data for his autobiography and that he liked this work. There can be no doubt that his autobiography, covering the most decisive decades of the Indian freedom struggle in which he had participated actively in the centre of events and could write about as a Marxist historian, would have been a document of the highest historical and political importance. But fate did not allow him to fulfil his intentions and hopes.

In the middle of May, 1962, Dr. Ashraf incidentally mentioned that he sometimes felt pains in the chest. He was advised, of course, to consult a doctor. He did so, but the electro-cardiogram did not indicate any symptom of illness. Then the unexpected, the unbelievable happened. On the morning of the 7th June, 1962, Prof. Dr. K. M. Ashraf at the age of 59 died of a heart stroke.

The Humboldt University, the teaching staff and students, the Indians living in the German Democratic Republic, his friends and representatives of public life, bade farewell to K. M. Ashraf at a solemn gathering in the Senate Hall of Humboldt University. Prof. Dr. W. Ruben, Director of the Institute of Indology, delivered the funeral oration.

The mortal remains have been buried in the "Cemetery of the Socialists" at Berlin-Friedrichsfelde. Here lies the great Indian patriot and outstanding scholar, Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf, side by side with the best of the German working class movement, who like him fought for freedom and socialism.

Dr. Ashraf was among us in Berlin for about one year only. But during this short period the scholar and man K. M. Ashraf exercised a very profound and stimulating influence on all of us. The study of Indian history in our country was put on a sound basis by him and became an essential part of Indology in the German Democratic Republic. Due to his efforts Indian history from the early beginnings till to-day is being read now as a continuous course covering several terms at the Humboldt University.

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In his special field of work – the history of Indian feudalism – he laid the foundations for continuous, systematic studies of this period at the Institute of Indology in Berlin. Apart from this his ever ready assistance helped our young indologists to progress in their work and to understand the problems of India more comprehensively. In doing this Dr. Ashraf was acting in the best sense of the word as an unofficial cultural ambassador of India to our country.

Ashraf is no more among us. It is our task to continue his work.

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The citizens of Delhi held a condolence meeting on the death of Dr. Ashraf on the 12th June at Darbar Hall. The Mayor of Delhi, Shri Nooruddin, presided over the meeting. Shrimati Aruna Asaf Ali, Comrade Bhupesh Gupta, Shri Yagya Dutta Sharma, Shri Mir Mushtaq Ahmad, Shri Brij Mohan, President of Delhi State Congress, and Dr. Swarup Singh, Principal of Kirori Mal College, Delhi University, paid homage to the services of Dr. Ashraf.

The following resolution was passed at the end of the meeting:

"This meeting of the citizens of Delhi expresses on the untimely death of Dr. Ashraf its sympathy with his wife and his children. Dr. Ashraf played an important rôle during the independence struggle of India. In 1921 in his student life he leapt into the struggle for national independence and during the British rule he went several times to prison. In 1930 he acquired an important place in the national freedom movement. Later on he became the elected Secretary of the All India Congress Committee and at the time of Pandit Jawaharlal's presidency he was given the task to propagate Congress ideas among the Muslim masses. His speeches had a very good influence on the people. Dr. Ashraf was connected with the left group inside the Congress and soon he became a supporter of Socialism. At last he joined the Communist Party and worked hard to spread socialist ideas among the masses.

"Dr. Ashraf was an eminent scholar and historian. He was considered an authority on the history of the Mughal period.

"During the last few years Doctor Saheb was a lecturer at Kirori Mal College, Delhi University. Later he was appointed a Guest-Professor of Medieval Indian History by the world famous Humboldt University in Berlin. Suddenly death claimed him as a victim and he left this world on 7th June, 1962.

"By the death of Dr. Ashraf our country has lost a great historian, scholar and patriot."

(*Awami Daur Weekly*, New Delhi, 17th June 1962 (Urdu))

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V

MINOR SCRIPTA AND DICTA OF K. M. ASHRAF

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K. M. Ashraf on Himself[1]

You have asked me to say something about the personalities and incidents which have influenced my life. But I am rather perturbed how to answer this question. I was nearly grown up about the year 1915, that is some 42 to 45 years ago. Now think yourself all that has taken place in our country since that time. The world has passed through so many stages from the time of the 1917 revolution to the Sputnik, and we have passed from slavery to independence. It may be considered my good fortune that soon after growing up I started taking an interest in my social environment. I had an opportunity to see certain movements of the period at close quarters. Perhaps it would not be wrong to say that like many other young men of that time I, too, had to pass mentally through certain stages. Till today I sometimes also feel that

صد بیابان بگذشت و دگری‌در پیش است[2]

You can see for yourself the difficulty of judging now the impressions of this period which was full of struggles, particularly since impressions change with further experience and the effects of personalities or incidents are not necessarily asting.

1

When the First World War started I was studying in a Muslim school in Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh). I lived with a teacher of this school at Mohalla Kasron. I remember those times also because my father had to go then to the Dardanelles front and to East Africa, and the family repsonsibility, therefore, fell upon my shoulders. My father's loyalty can be seen from the following incident. When his military special train was leaving from Delhi junction and he saw tears in my eyes, instead of comforting me he thrashed me and reminded me of our Rajput pride and gave me a long lecture on loyalty. As a result of this I had to submit, and I devoted myslf to taking care of my younger brothers. At that time I was about twelve years old. At last I started to read news-

[1] *Personalities und Events that influenced me*, ed. by Junaid Ahmad, Bombay, pp. 37–59 (Urdu).

[2] "He passed hundred deserts and still another one is before him."

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papers in order to know the situation at the front. When the news of the retreat from the Dardanelles came I felt anxious and went to the mosque. Gradually Chasht and Ashraq also adopted the daily observances and started prayers on the nights of Ramadan. Sometimes Shabina also attended. The religious Musalmans of Moradabad used to take a great interest in the discussions of the Arya Samaj. They came from long distances to hear the discourses of Ram Chandra and Maulvi Murtaza Hasan. Another favourite pastime were the performances of a Parsi theatrical company's drama *Khoone Nahaq*, and to see its handsome actor Nisar some people even sold necessities. But I developed no interest in these debates and plays. The reason for this was *Ḥazb Allah* the new party of Istafa Karim and ourselves. Istafa Karim was a graduate of Aligarh and had recently come to our school. In his dress and appearance he looked like a man from Aligarh. His home was in Bahlol (Avadh). But otherwise he was a real Maulvi. That means he was the first to arrive at the mosque and the last to leave. So I and other students cultivated a particular acquaintance with him. After a short time we started visiting. Every Sunday we gathered at his residence at Diwan Bazar. In the beginning he recited poems of Hasrat Mohani. Then Iqbal was recited and we started to enjoy the poem *Shikwa*. Perhaps in the third week the teaching of *Surat aṣ-ṣaff* and *Surat al-jumu'a* was begun, which exercised a particular attraction. The essence of all these teachings was to show that *Jiḥād* was the duty of every Musalman and that the main enemies of Islam were the English. At last it was also discovered that Istafa Karim was in fact a disciple of Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi and a member of a secret party of *Mujāḥidīn* which was busy organizing *Jiḥād* against the English. After a few days we also took the oath of *Jiḥād* and became members of *Ḥazb Allah*. In other words our political journey had begun.

My ancestral home was in Alwar State. But my paternal grandfather had settled in a village of Aligarh. Therefore during the holidays I used to go to Aligarh. After joining *Ḥazb Allah* I desired to see Hasrat and Hasrat Begum, who had taken part in the Swadeshi movement and had been arrested several times. Hasrat was still in prison, but Hasrat Begum had opened a shop for Swadeshi cloth at Raselganj. I saw Hasrat Begum for the first time in that shop wearing a black Turkish veil. She not only treated me with courtesy but in a motherly way. Her love and sympathy also influenced me because I had lost my mother in childhood. The next morning she called me to her home. This, as a matter of fact, was a servant's room in Dharampur building. Here the Begum lived. The entire property of her shop could perhaps not have been worth two hundred rupees (Rs. 200,–). The sales were small and there was always the danger of a search. But the Begum looked as though she possessed all the wealth of the world and all its pleasures. She and Hasrat always remained poor and it gives me pleasure to say that I was never without their tender affection. But of course the difficulty was that after Istafa Karim's teaching of *Jiḥād* which set up Hasrat and his wife as examples, for a long time no other leader seemed to us of equal stature.

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2

After the world war a new and revolutionary period of our independence struggle began. For people like us it had already started with the Hijrat movement. I had also enrolled my name in the first group of *mujāḥidīn*. But by chance the week that our caravan was to start for Peshawar, my father came back safe from the war and I could not join it. A few days later I passed the F. A. examination and went to Aligarh to join B. A. classes, acquiring all the grandeur of a senior student in accordance with the old traditions of M. A. O. College, which meant a fine, new English suit, curtains, furniture, clothes etc. – when the news of Maulana Mohammad Ali's release came. Then the Khilāfat movement started. After a short time Gandhiji became famous and Satyagrah became a talking point everywhere. "Boycott English goods". "To fight cases in English courts, to study in English aided schools, to take English titles, even to take English service – all these are *ḥarām*". "Wear Khadi, spin with a Charkha. Be prepared for Satyagrah." "Give donations to Khilāfat Swaraj funds." "Become a member of Congress. You will get Swaraj in a year. *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is the condition." Could anyone not be attracted by such activities? Of course I needed no order for Satyagrah. Even before the arrival of Gandhiji and Mohammad Ali I had started work for Satyagrah. When the English Principal invited parents in order to influence the students I also invited a Ḥazb Allahi friend from Moradabad, saying that he was my father, and he began to make speeches in the mosque of the College. For a month nobody discovered that he was not my father but only a friend. At last one day Gandhiji, and together with Gandhiji, Maulana Azad, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Hasrat Mohani, Azad Subhani, Satya Der and others – all the respected leaders of Congress and Khilāfat – arrived and we passed a unanimous resolution in the College Union to support "Non-co-operation". Now our demand was that the College should stop taking aid from the government. Since the College belonged to the nation, we seized its buildings. In a few days the foundation of Jamia Millia was declared in the College mosque by Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan. In other words, two separate camps were formed within the boundaries of M. A. O. College. One was formed by the College trustees and teachers, and the other by us, the supporters of the non-co-operation movement. At last the College authorities called the police in to help to remove us. Hasrat's advice was that we should engage in a clash with the police, but the other Congress leaders considered it against the principles of Satyagrah. However, one day early in the morning, we were all thrown out of the College. We started living in camps situated just across the street at a short distance from the College. In other words a new chapter of Jamia life had now opened for me.

Our life was typical. In name, Jamia was also a University. In fact Maulana Mohammad Ali himself used to give us lessons in English and history. But in fact it was a camp of the Satyagrah volunteers. After three or four batches of volun-

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teers had left the camp teaching began. After a few days Maulana Mohammad Ali drew up a syllabus: Maulana Mohammad Soorati was appointed to teach Arabic, Khwaja Abdul Hai to interprete the Quran. Maulana Aslam was for history, Maulana Sharfuddin for Urdu, Mr. Kelat for English and Mr. Singal to teach the *Gītā*. They were all teachers in the real sense. A fair number of participants in the non-co-operation movement gathered at Jamia. Apart from Aligarh there were young men from many other places such as Peshawar, Delhi, Hyderabad, Assam etc. I also joined them.

At that time I was sharing a room with two friends. We had each a green cloak of the Jamia. We had our food in the dining hall. For breakfast Tonki used to bring two-pice-worth of carrots every day. Our common property was a tin box containing four Khadi suits; one or two *angochhā*; a volume of *Dīwān-e-Ghalīb*; Mohammad Ali Lahori's English translation of the Quran, and some national songs published in Urdu at Meerut. My individual property consisted of a small, old carpet and twelve-anna shoes made of sheep's skin. For games we had an open field at Jamia where we used to play *Kabaddi* and *Gulliḍanḍa* at which I was adept. The atmosphere of Jamia had a particular attraction that could be called spiritual. My short story "Anand" published I think in an issue of *Adabi Dunya* (Allahabad) in 1940, recalls it. I will not repeat the details here. I remember very well how a few of us once showed our hands to a palmist and asked him to tell us our fate. When he looked at Rauf Pasha's hand he said, "In your fate there will be a sea voyage." Had it been anyone else he would have dreamed of a journey to Europe. But this was Jamia. Rauf Pasha said spontaneously, "I shall go on *Ḥajj*", and danced with joy. It was strange to see that Ghulam Husain Rotiwala was even happier than Rauf Pasha. But before telling his story I would like to introduce him:

Ghulam Husain was now growing old. One of his eyes was also defective. But for some years past he had been bringing biscuits to sell in the M. A. O. College. The year in which non-co-operation activities began he also started bringing *peras* (sweets) from the city. He was very religious and regular in performing *namāz* and *roza*. When we were thrown out of the College he also broke off his relations with the College. Now he depended on his sales to a poor community. Ghulam Husain lived in the city. His wife was already dead. Only one of his children, a daughter, was nearly grown up. Had it not been for her, I am sure he too would have joined Satyagrah and gone to prison. Ghulam Husain used to bring his big basket of biscuits from the city and arrive at the College as soon as it opened. He then placed the basket in a corner of the veranda and began selling. Every one could take what he liked and put as much money as he liked into the basket. There was no one to ask or to see what he did. If anybody asked Ghulam Husain why he did not keep an account of his sales, he would laugh and say, "It all belongs to them; what need is there of any account?" When the palmist foretold the sea voyage to Rauf Pasha and he interpreted it as good news of a future *Ḥajj*, Ghulam Husain started worrying how the expenses of the young man's pilgrimage were to be covered. At last, Rauf Pasha decided to go on *Ḥajj*. He did not economise his expenses, because he had money enough at home. One day I saw Ghulam Husain

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give a small bag of money to Rauf Pasha, saying, "In my whole life I have saved five hundred rupees. Please take them." Pasha was startled and asked him for the reason. Ghulam Husain said, "I also intended to go on *Ḥajj*. That is why I saved this money. Now you are going. Please use my money. I shall imagine that I have been myself." When Pasha refused this gift the tears came into Ghulam Husain's eyes. Seeing his sincerity, his love and his poverty, our hearts were also moved. In political life I have seen many who claim to be actuated by sincerity and love, but I have never seen anyone like Ghulam Husain. When he died a few years later he left no money but he had the happiness of seeing his daughter already married.

I still remember the horrors of 1922. On the one hand Gandhiji had suddenly stopped the Satyagrah movement laying the blame for Chauri Chaura's violence on the nation, and on the other, the Turkish Khilafat had died in the hands of Mustafa Kamal; and we were all drifting without any goal like a kite that had blown away. Where were the hopes that we would win freedom in one year? The day-to-day situation was like this: sometimes a Hindu-Muslim riot took place in one district, and sometimes news of killing and massacres came from another. After a few days the organized anti-national movements of *shuddhi* and *tablīgh* were added to these sponteaneous disturbances. In other words the chronic political and social trend in the country had now formed. I had already the habit of saying prayers and keeping fast but now my interest gradually increased to such an extent that my teacher of *dīnīyāt* (Islamic divinity) became my *murshid* (spiritual guide). In addition to his prayers five times a day, he used to perform the prayer of *tahajjud* (after midnight). So I also joined in. At last it was decided that I should also practice *chilla kashi*. Certain conditions were required, such as to give up eating meat and to observe complete purity. A particular prayer had to be repeated 26,000 times during *chilla* (the 40 days of fast). I might perhaps have stopped when these conditions told on my nerves, but the benefits of *chilla* were such that I did not like to give it up. I became convinced that in course of time I would be able to perceive the holy light of God. I would be able to see my spiritual progress from my dreams. In my school days I had already seen Hazrat 'Alī and the prophet, and there was no reason why this spiritual development should not continue in the future. Anyhow, I started *chilla* with full confidence and attention to the rules. For the sake of complete purity I started cooking my food myself. Whatever I saw in my dreams at night, or whatever came into my heart during the day, I told my *murshid*. As a matter of fact during the first twelve days there was nothing particular to be told. I had gained a full sense of inner satisfaction and sometimes I felt that I had entered a greater existence. But these imaginings were so dim and unclear that it was difficult to explain them to any *murshid*. At last, at the end of the thirteenth night and on the morning of the fourteenth, I had a somewhat clearer dream. I dreamt that I was sitting with a dear friend, Shankar Lal, in the shop of Kulal in our village, drinking cheap wine, and we were becoming tipsy. In the end we were so drunk that we fell down on the ground and slept. This was all I saw in my dream and I told it to my *murshid*. After hearing the dream, my *murshid* was

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silent for a little and then asked a number of questions. For example, "What did you eat in the night?" "Didn't you have night dreams?" "Were you in love with someone before you started *chilla*?" "Wasn't bribery included in your father's income?" Fortunately the reply to all these questions was in the negative. The *murshid* was silent again for a while and then, with a deep sigh, he began, "Spiritual development is not your destiny. You should give up the thought of *chilla* and *tahajjud*. Stolidity is written in your fortune for ever."

You can imagine what my feelings were after that. I slept less than four hours a day. The rest of the time I spent mostly in reading the Quran and various kinds of prayers etc. However, after a few days when I realized my situation, I gradually turned away from praying and fasting. But it took me several years, because it is more difficult to leave a habit than to develop one. Of course, certain social realities helped me.

In those days the leaders of the Arya Samaj all of a sudden decided that the neo-Muslim population should be taught the merits of their old religion. I am not only a Rajput Muslim but some of my near relatives are still Hindus, and those who are Muslims respect the old traditions of Chatri religion. So my "Malkana" community is still called "*adh-barya*" – half Muslim, half Hindu. That is why my father and grandfather had each a Muslim and a Hindu name. Not only the Arya Samaj but also Islamic preaching organizations were now attracted to this unknown community. Hindu and Muslim preachers began to appear everywhere. In the middle of 1924, through some of my relatives at Agra, I came to know that a great fair and a *tablīghī* conference were to be held at the same time in the village of Sandhan, in which about 500 Hindu and 500 Muslim preachers would participate, and after the session they would preach Islam and the Vedic religion in the Malkana village. Up till now I had never imagined that religion was also a kind of business, and that when religious myths were concocted they were supported by the forces of reaction.

I went to Sandhan on the occasion of this gathering although I had no opportunity of visiting any Malkana village of my own *nanihal*. My dress consisted of a Turkish cap, a fine *sherwānī*, *gurgābī* shoes and socks. In other words I looked like a Muslim from the town. Walking from Achchra station on foot, as I came near the village I saw a Thakur in his field and asked him, "Do any people of your village want to become Hindu?" He said with full confidence, "Yes." I asked, "Why?" He told me that earlier it was Aurangzeb's oppression that had forced their forefathers to become Muslims. Now was the period of freedom, and they wanted to return to our ancestral religion. He asked me about my homeland, and when I told him the name of my ancestral village he looked at me very attentively. He asked what my father's name was. As soon as I mentioned my father's name he recited the names of my mother, paternal and maternal grandfathers, uncles and aunts. Then he embraced me, saying "Son, I spoke to you in the belief that you were a Muslim from outside. Why didn't you tell me your name and connections at once?"

Now I heaved a sigh of satisfaction and asked why more pandits and maulvis than the number of inhabitants gathered in his village. The Thakur took out his

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pipe, laughed, and said, "Son, during the day we do not allow anybody to come into our fields, but when we have finished our work in the evening and have bathed and washed ourselves, we take our pipes and sit in the *chaupal*. Then naturally in some places the Vedas are recited and in others the Quran is expounded. Someone tells the story of Ramchandarji and someone recites the *kārnāmas* of Hazrat 'Alī. We are illiterate people. We do not have the good fortune to have any educated people in our village who can tell us about all these learned things." As he spoke the Thakur was as pleased as though all these gentlemen had gathered solely for his amusement. It might have been a cinema show put on free of charge for him and his relatives in this remote village. How could I convince the Thakur that these meetings which he was enjoying so much were creating Hindu-Muslim riots and mutual massacres in the towns? Thanks to my relationship with these people I was able to discover that *tablīgh* and *shuddhi*, whatever importance they may have had in our opinion, were only an amusement for a peasant tired after the day's labour. In the Thakur's own words: "This is the job of the comedian".

Next month I went to my *nanihal*. This was the village of Hathras. Here I found that Qadyani Maulvis had opened a school in my *nana*'s *chaupal* and the children were studying the Quran. Maulvi Saheb received me very cordially and when he had convinced himself that I did not have any prejudice against the Qadyanis, he took me aside and asked me to advise my *nana* to set up a mosque near the *chaupal* where the school was held and where daily prayers were already performed. I reported Maulvi Saheb's desire to my *nana* and also added a few words of recommendation on my own account. In the evening the Qadyani Maulvi and I were talking when my *nana* joined us, saying in pure Braj dialect, ' Maulvi Saheb, up till now I have said nothing. But since you have begun this talk of a mosque I must speak my mind too. See here; the week when you started performing *namāz* my cow died. The following month, when you started performing *namāz* in a group, my elder daughter fell sick and she is still ill. As you can see for yourself, these troubles came upon us while God was still at a distance from us. If his house is built here, he will destroy us all. None of us will survive."

Naturally Maulvi Saheb was troubled how he was to convince Thakur Saheb. At last he stopped performing *namāz* in the *chaupal* and a reconciliation was brought about. To this day there is no mosque in the village.

I was still in the village when Id came, and it happened that my father also arrived the day before Id. It was decided to perform *namāz* in a field across the canal. There is a small town, Lakhnu, near by. A Sunnī Hanafī Imām from that place agreed to lead the prayers. On the next day about fifty of us went to the field. The Imām performed *namāz*, rightly or wrongly, and we were going to return to the village. Meanwhile, I noticed that my father was getting angry with my maternal uncle. The reason was that the poor fellow had placed two flowers before an image of Mahadev which stood in the field. My father had studied Persian and Arabic. Moreover, he lived in the town. So the teachings of the *sharī'* had begun to influence him. He not only wore a beard himself but recommended others to do so. To worship an image was *shirk* (polytheism), and

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a great sin in his eyes. How could he possibly excuse my uncle's error? His anger and admonitions drew the attention of others. Among them were one or two old and respected men. It seemed that they too believed in the Hindu Devta as well as the Maʿbūd of Islam. Finally, when they saw that father would not be pacified, one of the old men took him aside. I followed them. The conversation between them began in the following way. My father said: "It is *shirk* and *gunāh* (sin) to worship an image." The old man asked him, "How do you know about the state after death? Has anyone ever returned after he has died?" My father was silent a little at this question. The old villager pointed to the image saying, "If after death he comes true, what will happen?" In reply my father repeated his Islamic belief but was not in any position to counter the old man's question. Finally the old villager advised my father, in pure Braj dialect, that since one does not know what will happen after death, it is better that both should be placated – "*Patu nain he dad na kaon kam ai ja*". I had heard the advice and the talk of the *boojh bujhakkar* (know-alls), and now in the end I had to acknowledge in my heart the humour and the philosophy of the village people.

3

After leaving Jamia an event took place in my life. That is to say, I became aquainted with the Maharaja of Alwar and even developed a friendship with him. This might have had various causes. First of all my forefathers were old inhabitants of Alwar. Some of them remained and were employed as officials in the state. But the direct cause of my meeting and becoming a friend of the Maharaja was the jubilee of the Muslim University. On this slight acquaintance the Maharaja invited me to come to Alwar during the summer vacations and to join him in tiger-hunting. You should not make the mistake of thinking that I have any interest in tiger-hunting, or that I have ever used a gun because I mention this. However, I stayed with the Maharaja in his palaces of Vijay Mandir and Sarska for two or three months during the summer of 1926. I should admit frankly that Maharaja Jai Singh pleased me very much at our first meeting. I was opposed to the rivalry of Hindus and Muslims, while he supported Hindu-Muslim unity and his practical aim was complete reconciliation.

I was tired of religious practices; he liked the spirit of *taṣawwuf* and *vedanta*. I hated the British Government. He tended a little in favour of independence and had supported the demand for the medical treatment of Maulana Mohammad Ali during his illness. I felt as though my ancestral homeland, Alwar, and its ruler were the spokesmen of my own patriotic feelings and urge for freedom. And if this judgement was in any way defective, Maulana Mohammad Ali's praises and admiration compensated. Anyhow, when after passing the M. A. and L. L. B. I again came to Alwar, the Maharaja insisted that I should now accept a job in his state. Finally it was decided that I should study for two years in England. So in 1927 I went to London and enrolled in Lincoln's Inn for bar-at-law and at the School of Orienta Studies for Ph. D. Fortunately Sir Wolseley Haig was appointed as my guide, who

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in addition to being an eminent historian had also lived in Alwar und had personal contact with the Maharaja.

I had hardly been a year or a little more in London, when the personal adviser of the Maharaja, Rao Raja Amar Singh, arrived in order to invite guests to the jubilee celebrations. Maulana Mohammad Ali and I went to Alwar on this occasion. In those days the Maulana had been living with me in London. The Maharaja was kind to both of us. We therefore lived for some time together in the royal palace. When the jubilee approached the Maharaja put me in charge of the Indian guests who were mostly Rajas and Nawabs. We had contracted with an English firm to supply the food for these dignitaries. We paid Rs. 52 for two meals per head per day. For the enjoyment of the guests a theatrical company was invited, to whom we paid Rs. 65 000 in advance. You can imagine the expenditure from the fact that we spent 30 *lakhs* in three days. which was scarcely less than the annual income of the state. I, of course, for the first time experienced the feudal system and its rulers, whom I, no less than the Congress leaders. used to consider the spokesmen of national independence and dignity. During those three days of the jubilee I went every evening to the tent of each dignitary to ask whether he or his staff needed anything. As usual I came to the tent of a certain prince from Rajputana. He was present in person. I asked, "Does your honour need anything . . .?" He answered, "I have every luxury, only the arrangement for the night is not sufficient." I thought that because of the winter season the fuel or electricity might not be sufficient. But I learned that this was not the trouble. He repeated, "Please, think of the night." This time my mind turned towards drinks. I thought that perhaps he had not enough wine. But it appeared that there was plenty. When he repeated the same sentence for the third time, I guessed that he wanted a beautiful woman for the night and that it was also part of our duties to arrange for this. I had to apologize that this shortage could not be remedied. "Please, wait only two days more, then you will return to your own state." Of course, I had to reconsider my future plans.

Perhaps it was on the third day of the jubilee. The Maharaja and I drove in his new Spanish car from Vijay Mandir in the direction of the city. The Maharaja himself was driving the car. There was no third person with us. Just after leaving the palace the Maharaja pressed the accelerator and the car was running at a speed of 80 miles per hour. The Maharaja usually drove the car at that speed. The road was straight and clear. On both sides the clay walls of the gardens were to be seen. A long distance off a constable in uniform was standing in the middle of the road and signalling to us that we could pass. The situation was like this: if the Maharaja tried to avoid the constable then there was the danger that the mud-guard of the car would be damaged by striking the mud wall; and if he avoided the wall of the garden then the life of the constable would be in danger. I was not accustomed to fast driving. My eyes were fixed on the road. I only saw that suddenly we were driving on after crashing into the constable at a speed of 80 miles. The Maharaja just turned his head once and threw a glance at the dead body. On our return he ordered a pension of five rupees to be given to the widow. The matter was settled,

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and, of course, the pious people of the city praised the kindness and humanity of the Maharaja.

Two weeks after the jubilee I was appointed personal adviser to the Maharaja and put in charge of the official guest house, the palaces and the godowns. I had a staff of about 500 under me. There were all kinds of people among them: clerks, typists, stenographers, guards, cleaners, cooks etc. One day a complaint came that a servant in the guest house had not come to work on time. He was found asleep in the building. The crime seemed to be a serious one. I ordered him to be brought to me. When the servant entered my office, without thinking I stood up out of respect. Fortunately no one else was present in the room. He was about 80 years old. His beard was white, his body trembled. I recalled my old maternal grandfather and his holy face. When I questioned him he frankly admitted his fault, "Yes, I have committed a fault. As a matter of fact I cannot stand for a long time. It is also difficult for me to bend or to carry heavy things." I was breathing heavily. At last I asked the old man why he did not leave the job and remember God. At this the old man began weeping and his white beard became wet with his tears. He said, "Sir, I do not have money even for tomorrow's food." In surprise I asked his age. He answered that he was over eighty. Wages? It appeared that he received Rs. 10 a month. Period of employment? He said, "I have been working as a servant for the last 35 years."

After this I could not hurt his feelings by asking further questions. A few days ater, of course, when the Maharaja left for Sarska for tiger-hunting, after arranging for his stay I excused myself on the plea of illness. And when the Maharaja had left, I returned to Aligarh.

4

At the end of 1929 I again came to London. Probably these were the happiest days of my life because now all that story was a closed chapter. And I had passed through the stages of[3] تراشیدم پرستیدم شکستم It is true that when I came as a protegé of the Maharaja I had had more money than I needed. Now my monthly income was 100 rupees, which was in no way sufficient, and I had sometimes to do without one meal a day. But the wealth which I received in the form of social and mental gains was worth more than a thousand rupees per month. I had earlier taken part with Srinivas Ayangar, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Saklatvala in the formation of the London Congress Committee. Now after my return to London I met those friends who were living in poverty like myself and who had long before me gone through these heartbreaking and enlightening experiences. The next Sunday we all met first at the house of Shapurji Saklatvala, and on our return from there we went to Highgate Cemetery. Here we took an oath at the grave of a new *murshid* who is still alive. I entered a new period of my life which was in every respect different from the past.

[3] "I scraped, worslupped, broke."

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Dr. K. M. Ashraf's Presidential Address to the Fourth Session of the All India Students' Federation

held in Calcutta on the 1st January, 1939[1]

"In the course of his Presidential Address, Dr. Ashraf said,

'I frankly confess to a sense of extreme hesitation and embarassment when I rise to address you on this occasion. Ten or twenty years ago the task of the president of the All India Students' Federation, if there was one, was comparatively simple and even pleasant. He was expected to deliver a bright sermon to the youth with apt quotations from classical writers and with an anecdote or two to relieve you from the strain of exhaustion. They do that successfully even now in the liberal federation and you get some of that atmosphere when you visit a well-provided lawyer or doctor of so-called liberal opinion. I am afaid you are no longer satisfied with that sort of stuff. You are faced with a concrete situation and living problems, and you want straight and clear answers to the various issues that face you. Comparatively young in years, yours is a privileged class which brings freshness and vigour to every problem it analyses. Unlike older people you are not obsessed with inherent and acquired inhibitions and you look to the future with confidence. It is not surprising that the old guard has been mercilessly treated by younger elements in some countries, and from what I see I feel it richly deserves its fate.

'Our country', Dr. Ashraf observed, 'has gone through two whole decades of national mass struggle and during the course of experience we have developed a bigger and broader outlook, until finally we have begun to realize that our national struggle is a part of the world struggle for a better order of society. We have definitely allied ourselves with democratic forces of the world against Fascism. The Indian National Congress has now formulated a more or less clear foreign policy of its own as against our imperialist rulers and it is a fact that at the same time when the Conservative British Premier was secretly helping Franco to win the war of Fascism in Spain, Pandit Jawaharlal, a distinguished ex-President of the Congress, was openly fraternizing with Republican Spain of the workers and peasants. In fact, valiant Indian comrades were actually fighting with the International Brigade, which built up a glorious defence of Madrid, and gave a concrete example of the international solidarity of weak and exploited humanity against imperialism and fascism. I take this opportunity to congratulate comrade Huddar

[1] The Indian Annual Register, ed. by Nripendranath Mitra, Calcutta, 1939, vol. 1 (Jan.-June), pp. 462–466. — The Conference was opened by Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose.

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who has just returned to India and comrade Anand who is with us. It is the same with China. The Indian National Congress has sent a medical deputation as a mark of its solidarity with the Chinese as against Japanese imperialists. The Indian national movement is no more an isolated phenomenon. It has been lined up with the world forces of democracy, peace and progress as against fascism and war'.

Referring to the student movement in India, Dr. Ashraf said, 'Essentially democratic and anti-imperialist in its nature it has allied itself with the progressive youth of the other countries.' He further said, 'I will not even tax your patience by examining the international crisis of capitalism. I am here concerned with the general lessons of this world struggle which I am afraid has not been fully realized in this country and we have to take very good care that we don't commit the mistakes which have cost so much to the peoples of other democratic countries. You remember that international capitalism suffered a complete collapse after the last World War, but except for the Communist Party of Russia other democratic movements failed to utilize the opportunity and capitulated before the onslaught of capitalism under the guise of fascism in various ways, until finally at Munich, capitalism succeeded in building up an open united front. By the very logic of the situation we too have to build up a united front of all democratic and progressive forces in India, and let us be clear as to the direction it takes on the national and international planes.

'When one hears politicians talking against Russia', he continued, 'and the Communist Party, one very much suspects that the lessons of the international struggle have not been imbibed by many of us in this country. The situation in India is undergoing a revolutionary change and the relationship of forces as between the various class groupings in society is shifting from day to day. The political parties and programmes are therefore without exception in a state of constant flux. As students of practical politics we must understand the process of history in the making, and the exact nature of social science, to understand the laws of motion underlying these changes, and to grasp the fundamentals of the Indian situation. Do not forget that social forces which cease to be progressive do not die out. They too change in reverse. Hence the growing conflict of ideology and its decisive significance in our national struggle. Speaking broadly, all our national struggles developed on the basis of a united front of all anti-imperialist forces in our motherland. But we have to determine from time to time what exactly is the role of a particular social group in a given situation in our anti-imperialist struggle. It is not very long ago that even political mass consciousness on a communal scale was progressive, even revolutionary, and the Hindu revivalist movement, the Pan-Islamic and the Khilafat movements materially contributed to our national struggle. But can we say the same thing today about the present forms of communalism? The message of Mahatma Gandhi was certainly of the utmost revolutionary importance in 1919 and even later, but can we say the same at the time when even according to him constitutionalism has come to stay? During the course of two decades our national struggle has released new social forces and one witnesses millions of peasants and workers joining our national struggle. The

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people of the Indian States are now coming in with a revolutionary fervour which was difficult to visualise even five years ago. The present leadership developed under very different circumstances, finds itself more or less helpless in the situation and one gathers the impression as if like King Canute we are trying to control the social forces instead of consciously developing them. This situation has given the problem of new leadership to correspond with the new social conditions, and it is here that the comrades like you are called upon to build up the new front of anti-imperialist forces and an appropriate leadership to suit the present situation. We are suffering from a deadlock in our national movement and it is difficult to visualise how we shall develop an alternative leadership and an adequate programme of struggle except on the basis of the working class, the greatest and the most consistent revolutionary force in modern society'. Answering the question why the student movement was organized on an all-India scale, Dr. Ashraf said, 'What you seek is simple and should belong to you as a right. You seek education, you want employment, you wish to live a happy and fruitful life. In short you stand for liberty, peace and progress both individually and as a group. These demands are by no means unreasonable . . . The question uppermost in your mind is who is responsible for the wreckage of your hopes, for the wastage of your life. And the answers bring you in conflict with the present social system, in the first instance, against British imperialism and its allies. This incidentally solves the question whether students should take part in politics. I do not think that you can keep out.'

Referring to unemployment and the Congress programme of village reconstruction and Wardha scheme of education, he said, 'I do not know how we can get through our national programme of reconstruction without a revolutionary capture of power. I do admit that under the Congress governments the attitude of authorities towards students has slightly improved, but I may be no more sure that the students can rise to their full stature even under the Congress governments.

'Among problems the student movement, like the national movement, is faced with are the disruptive forces of communalism. Attempts are being made both by Hindu and Muslim communal politicians to disrupt the national front of the student movement . . . Suffice it to say that communalism as a whole is nothing more or less than imperialist conspiracy to disrupt our democratic and national movement. Internationally, communalism is allied today with fascism. Only recently, the representative of the Muslim League met General Franco and gave him his blessing. We know only too well that Savarkar and Bhai Parmanand are working in India in the interests of Japanese imperialism.'

He observed, 'Again in our class organization of the peasants and workers communalism supports vested interests. It is committed to Federation, the status quo and the States, and in its methods and programmes it stands for constitutionalism against mass struggle. To elucidate this disruptive role of communalism I can only cite the example of Bengal, which has the good or bad fortune of government by a Muslim League ministry. Be it recorded to the shame of the present Ministry that our detenus have not yet been released in spite of agitation all over India'.

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Criticising the action of the Haq ministry of Bengal in this connection, he said, 'Instead of relieving the jute growers, the Haq Government have enforced the Ordinance and the way strikers are being treated is only too familiar to you. The present Government has actually gone a step further and has encouraged communalism in the ranks of the labour.'

Speaking of the organization of the Students' Federation and the work done by its members, Dr. Ashraf hoped that the Panjab which was unrepresented at Calcutta would soon join the Federation. He further observed 'So far the Federation is primarily urban in its character and your members are mainly enrolled from among college students. This is a serious limitation. For, in India, if the anti-imperialist movement, specially in these days of mass struggle everywhere, keeps on functioning within these limits, I am afraid we will be beset with serious problems of outlook and methods of work.' 'I find, moreover', he concluded, 'that we have so far done nothing to organize social and recreational activities among students . . . I am sure you will adopt concrete proposals towards this end in this conference'."

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Presidential Address to the Medieval Section of the Indian History Congress, Aligarh, 1960

Friends,

I was greatly moved by the unexpected honour when Dr. George Moraes, our General Secretary, informed me that the last session of the Indian History Congress, held at Gauhati, had elected me to preside over the deliberations of this section of the congress here. I am somewhat of a stranger to this august body and, in spite of my own grey hairs, I cannot avoid feeling like an immature student in the presence of my respected *gurū*, Professor Muhammad Habib, before whom I could only sit to learn, as we did in the twenties, and not to expound. Let me therefore crave your indulgence if, instead of displaying the limitations of my knowledge before my teacher and colleagues, I attempt to formulate some of the questions which have been increasingly occupying my thoughts and on which this distinguished gathering may be able to throw the light of its collective scholarship. I may assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that they are no rhetorical or leading questions for the sake of controversy but problems to which I, least of all, claim to know the answers at present.

Of course, you may if you choose dismiss these questions by saying, with good reason that "for the present, generalisation, interpretation or integration in Indian history can seldom claim more than a speculative value. It is, at the very best, a hypothesis, and at the worst, an intellectual gymnastic — but nothing more."[1] It naturally follows from this that the principal task of historians, particularly in India, is to occupy themselves exclusively with the collection of factual data and that everything else is to be regarded as of secondary importance. My only objection to such advice and warning would be that it is neither possible nor desirable to collect data without some perspective, particularly where our social history is concerned. In fact, every student of social history starts, wrongly or rightly, with a generalised concept and a perspective; and at least from the distinguished editor of the "History and Culture of the Indian People" we might have expected greater moderation in his total rejection of such a viewpoint. A generalised concept or image, however, is something like a distant landmark, which we keep in sight at the outset and which becomes more distinct as our collection of factual data advances. Only when we have made an exhaustive study

[1] Dr. R. C. Majumdar on *Study of Indian history* in Sardha-Satabdi special volume of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay, June 1959, p. 152.

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of all available materials can an historical problem or period be grasped in its concrete reality. But this method of work should not be confused with the adoption of preconceived notions or some dogmatic assumption around which to elaborate supporting evidence. We must be prepared for the outlines of our landmark to change as we approach and view it from a fresh angle. This landmark, as I conceive it, is itself a question that emerges from the overall knowledge which we already possess. In the case of medieval Indian historical studies in particular, it is not so much any lack of facts or data which stands on our way as certain preconceived notions about the course of our historical social development. Hence the present perspective assumed in medieval Indian history is, to say the least, not a little confusing and even misleading.

Let me explain my point by quoting some illustrative details.

Indology, as we all know, began with the study of Sanskrit, later of Pali and other Indian languages, and is still essentially confined to the study of our linguistics. It is true that the study of ancient Indian history was also included in Indology at a certain stage, but mainly as an aid to the study of Indian antiquities. History came in, one might say, by the back door. This indulgence, however, could not be extended to medieval India, which continued to be neglected if not actually despised until the beginning of this century. This may be seen from the outset in the attitude of the pioneer Indologist, William Jones, who considered the scholarship of the Mughal period to be a clear symptom of cultural decadence and thus unworthy of the attention of a serious Indologist. It now devolved on the British administrator to step in and study the records of this period for his own ends and with the characteristic outlook of the bureaucrat. He began with a search for an administrative manual of the Mughal empire for guidance in his own work, and with this in view Gladwin published the first translation of the *Aīn-i-Akbarī* in 1800. This was followed by a demand for a summarised version of medieval Indian history and Briggs published his text of Ferishta in 1832. It is mainly on the basis of this meagre source material that Elphinstone compiled his history of the period which appeared in 1841. For the study of the Hindu legal system William Jones had already made a beginning with his translation of the *Institutes of Manu* and a portion of *Fatāwa-i-Alamgīri* was now rendered into English. The Christian missionary also from an early date extended his helping hand to supplement the work of the administrator and the study of our social and religious life fell to the share of people like Du Bois, followed by Bishop Heber, Herklot and several other observers of that type. There are, of course, notable exceptions. For instance, the information on our system of education and learning gathered by Buchanan and Adams, the history of the Sikhs by Cunningham and of the Rajputs by Tod and Forbes, the history of Lahore by Latif and a monograph on the domestic life of the Muslims of Oudh.

This phase of comparatively liberal views and intellectual curiosity, however, came to an abrupt end when, after the experience of the 1857 rebellion, the British government took direct charge of Indian administration. The details of imperialist policy were now carefully worked out for various spheres of Indian political and

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cultural life, and no less a person than Sir H. M. Elliot, the then Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, was entrusted with the task of applying it to the field of historical studies. It was with these clear objectives, so boldly stated in his preface to the first volume, that Elliot began in 1867 the publication of his famous series of the *Historian's History of India* which, curiously enough, still forms the basis of most of our writings on medieval Indian history. I am far from denying the value of Elliot's translation and collection of extracts from a wide range of medieval Persian chronicles and other historical writings now embodied in these volumes. I only object to his choice in making the selection, which carefully excludes all records of social and cultural significance necessary for forming a clear picture of medieval Indian life. The technical deficiencies of Elliot's work have been partly corrected by Hodiwala and by Professor Habib; but the problem of a proper documentation for a social and cultural history of the period still remains unsolved. On this occasion I am only interested in underlining the fact that, with the entry of a foreign imperialism in the field of our politics and our cultural life, our historical studies ceased to be "an intellectual gymnastic" and after 1857 were systematically subjected to wilful distortion.

The effect of this carefully thought-out political manoeuvre on the part of our British rulers was disastrous for indigenous historiography, for most Indian historians failed to evaluate its political implications in the context of our developing struggle against British imperialism. Some of us hardly realised that by accepting the perspective of medieval history as laid down in Elliot's work, we were being unwittingly diverted into the rival political camps of Hindu and Muslim chauvinists who, under imperialist guidance and inspiration, were now busy disrupting our national struggle.

In the eighties and nineties of the last century the situation was not so bad, and R. C. Dutt, the great pioneer in the field of our historiography, even while regarding medieval India as a "Dark Age" and confining himself to ancient Indian history, abstained from commenting on medieval political, social or cultural life. In course of time, however, a distinctly Hindu and communal view of our history began to find favour, especially in the more politically advanced provinces of India, and the earlier achievements of European Sanskrit studies and Indian linguistics were now exploited to strengthen their position. This process was hastened by the growing neglect of the study of Persian and Arabic – the only languages in which the bulk of source materials were available for a proper and balanced study of medieval history and culture.

In some respects, the Muslim historians of medieval India, because of their firm and old tradition of narrative history and their first-hand knowledge of source materials, were better situated. Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan and Zakaullah both refused to be provoked by the work of Elliot. In fact, Sir Sayyad laid the foundation of new research technique by editing the texts of *Aīn-i-Akbarī* and *Tuzk-i-Jahangīrī* and by writing *Āsār-us-Sanādīd* on the antiquities of Delhi; he even assisted Elliot in the collection of materials for his "History". It was, however, different with his successors who diverted the course of narrative and objective history

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into one of apologetics for the defence of the old Muslim empires, and in course of time identified themselves with the communal and separatist trend of Muslim politics in India. It was Professor Habib who disabused our minds of much of this Muslim chauvinism by writing his history of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni and by courageously fighting the growing trend of Muslim separatism even during the worst days of aggressive communal politics. I am afraid that this trend still survives and has recently acquired a religious-revivalist camouflage; it now parades a pseudo-scientific phraseology of the Spengler type and the young Aligarh historian has to be on his guard against such distractions.

Many of us lived through the experience of communal riots and mutual Hindu-Muslim killings during the period of our political struggle for freedom which was accompanied by the massacres of the Partition days. I am not here discussing the political background of the events, but you will perhaps permit me to observe that a distorted view of, or misplaced emphasis on, certain aspects of our medieval Indian history has been partly responsible for fostering these communal political trends and thus indirectly helped to prepare the ground for such conflicts. I take this opportunity to pay my sincere homage to the worthy band of our historians who adopted a progressive and national outlook in politics and fought the reactionary communal trends in our midst, in particular to the group of Allahabad historians who made positive and valuable contributions to the solution of the problem by their study of the development of a common and composite culture in medieval India. Eventually the efforts of scholars like Dr. Tara Chand pursuaded Gandhiji to include such studies in his syllabus for Basic Education. I submit, however, that any orientation of our medieval history which emphasises one particular aspect, even though it may be a progressive one, to the exclusion of others, must, in the final analysis, fail to give us an all-sided view of our life or a correct understanding of our social dynamics.

Friends, I have now placed before you my estimate of the dominant trends in our study of medieval Indian history and I must confess that they do not help me in forming a clear perspective of our historical social development during this decisive period of our history. I therefore submit that we should review the data and re-evaluate them in order to gain a more integrated and comprehensive image of our medieval society and of its laws of motion. A fresh start in this direction is even warranted by the advances made in our investigations of the material since the days of Briggs and Elliot.

Thanks to the publications of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, supplemented by those from Baroda, Aligarh, Hyderabad, Rampur, Srinagar, Bombay and other institutions, as well as individual efforts on the part of certain scholars, the series of our political chronicles and biographical writings are now almost complete. One could perhaps add to these the histories of Qandhari and Bhimsen, the *Waqiat* of Asad Beg, a few more *Inshas*, *Dastur-ul-Amals* and collections of medieval *Fatwas*, *Nafais-ul-Maasir* and a selection from certain archives like Hyderabad, Jaipur, Patiala and Satara. But there is ample material for a fresh study of political events and I am happy to observe that Aligarh is now publishing fresh

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documentation of medieval India in Hindi. As regards original sources for provincial history, a good beginning has already been made with the publication of such standard texts as the *Mir'at-i-Ahmadi* and *Zafar-ul-Waleh* for Gujrat, the *Futūh-us-Salātīn* for the early period of the Deccan, and the *Tarīkh-i-Hasan* for Kashmir. Much good work is being done in collecting and publishing manuscript materials on Rajput history and scholars have now access to the rich *bhandars* of the Jains and the libraries of the various princes of Rajasthan and Bundelkhand. Add to this the Hindi, Urdu and other language texts of historical value and we may say that there are now available substantial source materials for our regional histories of the period. In fact, in the case of Bengal, Dr. R.C. Majumdar started working on a comprehensive history of the region as long ago as 1935. Now almost every State is planning to write its own history and some have completed their work. A thorough and well-documented history of the Deccan is still a desideratum but distinguished scholars like K. A. N. Shastri are there to frame and carry out such plans; in fact, his own work on Deccan history has already gone a long way to meet the demand. Valuable work has already been done on Maratha history; the history of the Jats will be given a fresh stimulus with the foundation of the new Kuruksetra University. It may be noted in this connection that the Sindh Government in West Pakistan has taken great pains to collect source materials on their regional history and Sindhi scholars are now busy writing a history of their region's social and cultural development.

There are, of course, other sources of information and the epigraphical and numismatic data of the period are now available in much greater volume. We have now even a monograph on medieval Indian seals. I may here refer to the fact that all the historical poems of Amir Kusraw are now available in good printed editions and a selection of the *Diwan of Mutahhar* has appeared in the Oriental College Magazine of Lahore. The *Ghazals* of Amir Hasan and the *Qasīdas* of Badr Chach are already included in our syllabus for the study of the Persian language. However, the *Shahjahan Nāmas* of Kalim and Qudsi, the *Kulliyāt* of Sauda and properly edited texts of *Bostān-i-Khayāl* and *Fasāna-i-Azād* still await publication.

It would not be out of place in this connection to mention that a new prospect is now opening for the study of Indology, not only in the new socialist world but also among the new independent states of Asia. Eventually Africa and South America, when conditions exist, will turn their attention to the history of India whose independence struggle encouraged their own. There is already a search for new orientation in institutions for Oriental studies in England, West Germany, the United States and Japan. It appears that Indology, instead of being confined to the narrow field of Indian linguistics and antiquities, is henceforward to comprise our history, ethnography, politics and economics – in a word, the whole course of Indian social development. This would naturally affect the study of medieval Indian history and extend both the range of our historical studies and our methods of approach. It is not perhaps sufficiently realised that the traditions of Indology in the Socialist countries are both old and healthy and well established

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In Russia, for instance, they go back to the foundation of the Academy of Sciences at the end of the seventeenth century, in Czechoslovakia to the comparative philologist Dobrovsky in the eighteenth. The Hungarian contribution to Indology is, of course, known to us. We are also acquainted with the fine contributions of the older generation of German scholars to Indian linguistics and antiquities as well as to the study of Islamic and Iranian cultures. In the new German Democratic Republic, although these old disciplines still occupy a place of pride, a course of Indian history, including the study of medieval India, has already been introduced at Berlin, and the Oriental Institutes of Leipzig and Halle, with their richer collections of oriental texts and printed books, are soon going to make similar arrangements. It will be helpful for our work if we follow the researches of the Socialist, particularly of the Soviet scholars, in the field of medieval Indian history. The late professors Reisner and Baranikov, for instance, had already done extremely valuable work on social movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the researches of Professor Dyakov and his pupils have carried these investigations still further. You will perhaps be surprised to learn that a study of the Raushniya movement, which we have neglected, has already appeared in Soviet Russia and it would do us all good to read the presentation of Akbar by Antonova.

It must be known to you that the British Government has already budgeted a handsome grant for extending oriental studies and a congress of South-East Asian historians which met in London not long ago has given a fresh stimulus to British scholars for the study of Indian history. This is reflected in the revised edition of Smith's *Oxford History of India* and in plans for publishing the second volume of the *Cambridge History of India* at an early date. I need not emphasize that a number of new textbooks of Indian history have lately appeared in England and Mr. Peter Hardy has only recently published his monograph on the historians of medieval India.

This new enthusiasm for the study of Indian history is also reflected in the USA. The Columbia University Press brought out this year a thick volume on the *Sources of Indian Tradition*, including medieval India. Like Elliot the compilers of this book have collected and translated extracts from original documents for the whole range of history, duly emphasized our 'spiritual heritage', but added nothing appreciable to our information.

This apparently widespread interest in our subject and the facilities and documentation that are now available should be a challenge to our further efforts and it is our responsibility that our country's history should be correctly interpreted. It is from reasons such as these that my questions arise and with your permission, I shall now put them to you for your consideration.

First, let us consider the basic problem of periodisation and attempt to define where the medieval period of India begins and where it ends. We know that there was a medieval India as distinct from ancient India and, in their own way, all scholars of Indian history have not only taken this for granted, but have also drawn their own arbitrary lines of demarcation. I am not suggesting that a scientific so-u tion of this problem is by any means easy. One may observe a big break in

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production relations with the disintegration of the Gupta Empire, when new feudal relations begin to emerge; but before a fully developed feudal society has matured, a fresh wave of tribal invasions – second perhaps only to the Aryan immigration at a very early stage – set in and dragged us down to a lower and undeveloped stage of tribal feudalism. I am referring to the Rajput phase of medieval India, when the great economic and social advancement registered in the Gupta period was probably interrupted by the inroads of the Rajput clans which now occupied the political stage, assisted by the Brahman priesthood. Some scholars of this period have further observed that our comparatively self-sufficient village communities began to crystallize during this phase of disintegration of the Gupta Empire. However, I do not want to speculate any further on this point or even suggest that the acceptance of the Rajput period as the starting point of our Middle Ages satisfactorily solves the problem of periodisation.

In any case, even if we begin with the invasions of the Turks and the establishment of a Turkish state, our perspective of medieval India is by no means very distinct. We are now confronted by a new social formation, – the military-patriarchal feudalism of the Turks and the Mughals – which soon imposes itself on the backward economy of the Rajput tribal society, thanks to its superior military strategy and tactics and its clear concept of a unified and centralised government, based on the organised and armed support of its retainers and slaves. In due course, the Mughals also built up a regular and elaborate bureaucracy for the administration of their government, which helped to stabilise their empire in spite of the absence of a law of succession. By its policy of uprooting the old feudal structure of the Rajputs, which had chained the peasantry to serfdom, the new order for a while appears to be somewhat progressive. For the old relationship of utter subjection it offers to the peasantry the bait of *Qabūliyat* and *Patta*, in other words, of a new form of pseudo-contractual relationship, and even scrupulously protects them from the depradations of its own army. For the day-to-day administration of the government, the new regime organizes a 'service nobility', comprising the *Iqta*-holders (in the case of the Turkish Sultans) and the *Mansabdārs* (in the case of the Mughal emperors) and tries to rescue the peasant from the tyranny of the old feudal hierarchy. In course of time, this new form of feudalism, fortified by the 'steel frame' of the *Mansabdārs* and the administrative machinery of the government, developed into a far more effective and ruthless instrument of oppression and exploitation than the old Rajput order and drove the producing classes to destitution and desperation. Meanwhile, the policy of state control of economy, dictated by the huge war expediture of the Mughals, hindered the development of a big internal market and suppressed the growth of a healthy middle class, except perhaps in coastal towns of western India. In their turn, these rulers failed to develop an adequate organisation or a proper form of state capitalism. As a result the Turkish and Mughal empires disintegrated just when they had succeded in uniting the whole land under a centralised government, and the very elements of administrative unity and of a common culture gradually turned into symptoms of social parasitism and decay. No wonder if the young European

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capitalism soon discovered the clay feet of the Mughal giant and overpowered him without much effort.

I hope you will help us to evaluate correctly the role of the Turkish and Mughal empires in medieval Indian history. I would finally ask you to evaluate the popular movements of peasant and mass resistance against the growing tyranny and exactions of the new ruling class and place them in a correct perspective. It sometimes puzzles a student of medieval India to find that there is little evidence of any open and organised resistance on the part of the common people during the early phase of the Turkish Sultanate, even when the central structure of the government breaks after the invasion of Timur in 1398. What one observes among the broad masses of people is more or less a sense of despair, as reflected in the messianic trend of the *Mahdavi* teachings in the fifteenth century and in the passive attitude towards politics among the early saints of the Bhakti movement. This atmosphere of comparative inaction, however, changes under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb and there is ample evidence of the growing spirit of revolt among the peasantry all over the country. It is also noticeable that the early *Bhakti* philosophy of the peace-loving saints had meanwhile changed its content and the new *gurus* in some regions were openly preaching the doctrine of armed and mass revolt. All this is very much in evidence not only among the Jats of Mathura and Agra and the Satnamis of Hariana but on a much bigger scale in Maharastra and the Punjab, where the peasantry adopts guerrilla tactics and carries on a regular 'people's war' until the Mughal empire is undermined by the pressure of these revolts. This, however, is not the aspect I wish to emphasise on this occasion, but rather the tragic fact that these organised and widespread armed struggles of the common people utterly failed to throw up any democratic political organisation or a progressive leadership but only led to the rise of the backward empires of the Peshwas and of Ranjit Singh which were no improvement on the Mughal regime. In their turn these new empires either broke up into plundering gangs of the Pindaris and Thugs or just faded away before the British conquerors.

In fact, if you permit me to speculate and to generalise a little further, I would say that the total picture of medieval India is one of interrupted and stunted growth, with occasionally just the faint beginnings of something resembling the great milestones of Reform and Renaissance. But there should be no mistaking the fact that what we notice are only the tiny seeds of a revolutionary process of social change but never their fruition. You will kindly help us to solve this great puzzle.

Friends,

these three major problems which I have raised here – namely, the question of periodisation, the rôle of the Turks and the Mughals and the character of the mass movements of resistance – are by no means the only major problems that must eventually be tackled if our history is to remain intelligible in the ever-growing wealth of factual evidence. I do not hold the view that the whole of this vast scientific apparatus can be adequately digested into an inspired generalisation by any single worker in the field. From each of the major problems a host of

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others, often involving highly specialized knowledge, branch out and demand solution. But so long as we ignore the broader issues we must either tacitly perpetuate the outworn assumptions of our predecessors or accept the new ones that are being devised by others, which, even when they are flattering to our national pride, cannot in the nature of things replace a specifically Indian interpretation of Indian culture. I would also remind you of the forthcoming International Congress of Orientalists which is going to meet in Delhi in 1963, and I would like to suggest that in preparation for this event we should consider some of these leading problems and ensure that some solid contribution to their solution is presented on behalf of Indian historical science.

Friends, in concluding this address permit me to thank you once again for the honour you have done to me by attending this session of the Congress and for the indulgence you have shown in patiently listening to my address on this occassion.

Berlin, 12. 12. 1960

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Interview with K. M. Ashraf

dated 27th October, 1960, recorded by N. L. Gupta[1]

Q. Why did you become communist?

A. I was a Gandhite.

"Swaraj within one year" and the Chauri Chaura incident made me think. I was concerned. Shaukat came from Moscow and I protected him for six months and got him a job in Kalanaur Rajput High School. I was persuading him to take to Gandhiji up to 1923. I passed a period of suspicion and doubt after that. I had an opportunity of knowing Maharaja Jai Singh as a friend and patron. I had lost all faith because he did not abolish feudalism. The Nehru Report protected feudalism and did not mobilise the people. I became more and more convinced of two things: (1) Economic emancipation is a necessary part of political freedom; (2) The Congress leadership represents middle class interests, and is not even willing to fight feudalism. It gave up the will to direct struggle and wanted to deceive the masses because it feared them. My suspicions were confirmed by all the subsequent movements of the Congress initiated by Gandhiji. Instead of being a movement of millions of people against British imperialism it was a camouflage to put pressure on British imperialism in order to secure the limited interests of the Indian bourgeoisie. However, I could see no alternative and had deep feelings of respect for Gandhiji and Nehru. I turned towards communism about the time of the Round Table Conference in London. I saw the bankruptcy of Gandhiji's tactics and strategy and the logical culmination when Gandhiji compromised with the princes and the landlords at the Round Table Conference; because of this he failed at the Round Table Conference and was put in prison on return. By this time the Meerut conspiracy case had come.

Q. When did you become disillusioned by the experience of the National Movement?

A. With the election of Jawaharlal as Election President and the 1935 Act, a new opportunity was offered to Congress radicals to press for a social programme in the Congress to fight British imperialism by refusing to work the 1935 constitution. At Karachi the Congress had accepted the fundamental rights resolution. I had a deep feeling that Jawaharlal reflected a new mood of the Indian radical youth. He had attended the anti-Imperialist Conference and was talking the

[1] Kirori Mal College, Delhi University.

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language of Marxism in 1936. I joined the secretariat of the A. I. C. C. with the feeling that we were on the threshold of a fresh mass struggle. I was very much impressed by the Congress resolution on collective affiliation. I therefore suggested that we make a direct approach to the Mussalmans. I was fully convinced that any honest and consistent anti-imperialist struggle led by the Congress would wean away the Muslim masses from the growing influence of Jinnah and the revived Muslim League.

My disillusionment with Pandit Nehru was a long and painful process. It began with the Nehru Report when he started the independent League and yet the Nehru Report supported feudalism. He compromised with Gandhiji on the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

I was in England when Gandhiji came to London for the Round Table Conference and British imperialists hanged Bhagat Singh as if to spite the Indian leaders. Besides, Nehru had pressed for fundamental rights at Karachi. I was depressed but not disillusioned yet. My disillusionment came when I worked with him in the A. I. C. C. We began with the resolution on collective affiliation; just nothing was done to implement it. Even more, Nehru openly declared that Congress was fighting the general election under the 1935 Act, not to work ministries. After some time, his own sister was put in office in U. P. and found excuses to run the constitution until the growing war situation made it impossible for the Congress to work it. I still believed that Nehru did not live up to his profession because although the socialist radical section was small before 1936, by then the CSP had come into being; the working class was a big force; the C. P. I. and the students, women, and the Indian States People's movement, together with the All India Kisan Sabha created a new situation, and in spite of Nehru, would have carried the day even against Mahatma Gandhi. He did not act. So I started thinking. My scepticism was much greater when Cripps visited India for the first time and the Americans started manoeuvring. The war period did nothing to cheer me up. It was all bourgeois manoeuvres, pressure politics and the fear of the masses coming up. Gandhiji declared in 1942 that he could not bear the working class joining Satyagrah. At no stage from 1936 to 1942 did Nehru move his little finger to carry the movement further and seize the initiative from the right wing. Even Subhash was better.

Q. What do you think of the Muslim League demand for Pakistan and the stand of the C. P. I.?

A. The CPI was fundamentally influenced by two factors: (1) the growing war situation and the new policy of throwing out British imperialism finally from our soil; (2) The CPI thought that the initiative could only come by the unity of the League and Congress leaders. Ever since 1936 the CPI had witnessed the growing influence of the Muslim League which had grown into a mass organisation by that time. I need not go into the reasons why the Muslim League should have turned overnight into a full-fledged manager, but this was partly due to the opportunity offered by Congress tactics during these years when they deliberately abandoned

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the struggle of mass contact for ministry making. By 1940 the Muslim League passed the Pakistan resolution and by 1942 Jinnah actually assumed a position like Gandhiji so far as Muslims were concerned. The CPI insisted that Gandhiji and Jinnah should meet if there was to be any united front against British imperialism. It is against this background that the CPI was misled by the slogan of self-determination and mistook the feeling of Muslim communalism in India for something representing the organised expression of the Rerhi-Pak-Pathan Nationalities for self-determination. It was certainly a distortion because we conveniently forgot the whole history of British imperialism and communal politics. But the fact remains that the general political estimate of the CPI in the given situation was *prima facie* superficially correct. To fight British imperialism we had to bring Jinnah and Gandhi together and to understand the dynamism of the Muslim League we had to make some concession to the feeling of Muslims for a separate region of their own.

Q. Can you throw light on the relations between the CSP and CPI during the 1930s?

A. I happened to be a member of the CSP when it was formed. I was also a member of the CPI – a fact which was known to the CSP, Mr. Masani and later on Yusaf Meharalli of the CSP. Our differences began not on the basis of ideology but of the day-to-day work. The communists in their characteristic manner tried to create as big a social base for the CSP as possible. They enrolled members of the CSP, formed trade unions and worked in Kisan Sabhas, organised the A. I. S. F., and the women's movement, even the Indian States People's Congress. On the basis of this work they were naturally entitled to proportionate representation in CSP conferences. This scared people like Jai Prakash Narayan and Masani and prolonged negotiations used to be held to cut down the CPI delegates inside the CSP. The CSP cadres on the whole, except in Gujrat, Maharashtra and Bombay, were negligible. It was just a petty bourgeois organisation of highly self-centred individuals like Lohia. Eventually people like Masani succeeded in working up anti-communist feelings. Among the rest of the socialist leaders like Acharya Narendra Dey they blamed the communists for fraction work, for organised functioning in the main organisation and in general for working as a team with a clear-cut Marxist ideology. Demands were made that the CPI be dissolved and that a loose organisation like the CSP be formed. It was of course not accepted. I feel that the break really came on the crucial question of leadership and initiative. The CSP supported Gandhiji and individual Satyagrah while the CPI emphasised the mobilisation of masses of peasants and workers on the basis of clear-cut, determined, anti-imperialist struggle. By 1940 the break was complete and I handed my resignation to Yusaf.

In 1942 when the differences arose about policy, the CSP carried on a virulent propaganda against the CPI and called them traitors. I suppose this is still in fashion with socialists. The CSP later on joined a Gandhite, Kripalani, and the new PSP represents neither socialism nor any radical trend. It is mainly known for

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its anti-communism. In some respects it seems to me nearer to the Swatantra party than to Nehru in the programme of national and social construction.

Q. What is your opinion about Subhash's debacle?
A. I was very closely associated with Subhash Babu in this particular phase. While demonstrating his anti-imperialism to the fullest extent, he wanted to carry on the Congress without the cooperation of the Gandhites who had already signified strong resentment against his election as Congress President. The Gandhites had also refused to participate in his working committee. This could hardly be called an auspicious occasion for starting a decisive national fight against British imperialism in the midst of a world war. Besides Subhash Bose had come out with a programme which had a lot in common with fascist conceptions of the State. The CPI while helping Subhash Bose to win the election insisted that he give up his idea of running the Congress in the interest of fascism. He did make some concessions in this respect but they came too late and were too tardy. His lieutenants, like L. Shankar Lal, were already busy carrying on propaganda against Nehru and Gandhi and the picture of Haripura was one of a divided house. Eventually at the Calcutta A. I. C. C. the right wingers successfully outwitted the Subhash section and put Rajindra Prasad, a trusted candidate, on the Congress *gadi*. The CPI wanted unity for struggle and had supported him for his anti-British imperialism, but could not be a party to his faction at this moment.

Q. What is your opinion on the charge against the CPI that it functions on orders from Moscow?
A. I have heard that charge all my life. I have yet to understand what it means. Personally I have friends who have been to Russia – Shaukat, Akbar, Fazal Ilahi and several others. But they seemed to be fully conscious that their job lay in India and that they had to function in Indian conditions to carry the movement a step further. What they did say – and we learnt this through bitter experience – was that the Indian bourgeoisie cannot lead the country either to a complete break with British imperialism or to the establishment of a democratic state, to say nothing of a socialist state. Just imagine promising Swaraj in one year in 1920 and then having to wait till 1947 and the world situation to be free. I am not aware at any stage in my life that I have been influenced in my thinking either by the Comintern or by Russia. It is true that the Comintern was a great force in giving us a perspective of the international situation and imparting to us the experience of the working class in the capitalist countries and of fellow anti-imperialist fighters in the backward countries. They also gave their estimate of the bourgeois parties in our country and as novices in our work we benefited from the experience of the working class leadership of the Comintern. But that is quite different from laying down directives for our work in India. There was no British Imperialism, no bourgeoisie, no working class or peasantry of the Indian type within the purview of the Comintern leadership. Even in giving an estimate of Indian conditions they had to be guided by us as to Roy's theory of colonisation, their own estimate of

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bourgeois revolution, or the character of the Indian bourgeoisie. Similarly there was a lot of discussion on the nature of united front organisation, its component elements, and the nature of the work.

Q. What do you think of the charges that J. P. Narain levied against the CPI and the reply of Ajoy Ghosh to him?
A. One has to think of the background of the CPI. Partly the CPI grew out of militant Trade Unions in Bombay, Calcutta etc. It minimised the rôle of Gandhi, Nehru or Subhash. Some of the leaders of the CPI came over to the party from the A. I. C. C. and they probably over-emphasised the rôle of the Congress leaders. So one may say up to a point that the militant Trade Union orientation of the party looked to international factors, while nationalist communists[2] looked at Indian conditions. It was a healthy development because it is in the synthesis of these two groups that the correct solution of our problem lies.

Q. Was the policy of the CPI during 1942 correct?
A. Since we live in India within the limits of national frontiers we do not see the decisive influences of international social factors on our destiny. I hold that the great change in Asia came directly as the result of the October Revolution. Some Indians in their naïvete feel that a miracle was performed by Gandhiji and his Charkha. I am equally convinced that the freedom of India in 1947 arises primarily because of the defeat of Hitler and the new alignment of world forces. Shall I say we are free because the Red Army marched on Berlin in spite of the equivocations of Churchill and other imperialists? Some of our nationalist leaders are still inclined to believe that British imperialism offered us freedom on a silver plate and that Mountbatton was a great saviour.

Apart from all the devilish things the Britishers were planning to do, the Congress had stood for antifascism consistently. It really meant a due appreciation of the rôle of the U. S. S. R. Every man of commonsense could see that the entry of Russia could transform the character of the war. Whether we call it a People's War or not the fact of Russia fighting against Hitler signified the complete liquidation of colonialism – this in spite of the intentions of the U. S. A. and the U. K. I am afraid British imperialism understood its character better than we did. It could see the change written on the wall with the marching of the Red Army to Berlin, the Indian National Army, the Azad forces trial, etc. It is quite significant that the first meeting of the A. I. C. C. after the release of congressmen passed a resolution repudiating all the struggle by congressmen and socialists under the illusion that it was a fight to the finish under congress leadership. There was a lot of slander of communists in 1942. Writing at this date the perspective is clear enough. The bourgeois leadership was only manoeuvring for pressure politics and forgot all about the world issues and that the future of humanity was at stake. The CPI was the only party in India – thanks to their internationalism –

[2] I. e. those who came to the C. P. I. from the nationalist movement. [H. K.]

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that realised the significance of events and took a correct stand even though it was difficult to implement it under colonial conditions.

Q. Were there differences of opinion?

A. We were all in prison and found no opportunity of discussing the issues, except through cypher communications. I was in Deoli Camp and we were naturally influenced by the big events like the entry of Russia into the war. I do not think there was any difference within Communist ranks. The CPI alone knew the character of Hitlerism and followed the events in Spain, Germany and Czechoslovakia. They knew what was at stake both for humanity and India. So there were no differences among communists.

Q. What were the relations between the CPI and the Congress before Independence?

A. The right wanted to have the leadership in their hands. Even the extreme right was talking the language of revolution. They wanted to show the CPI more as a manoeuvre. There was no democracy within the Congress. They obstructed the work of communists within Congress. They debarred communists from building up the All India Kisan Sabha. They slandered communists as atheists, and set up an enquiry against communists etc.

Q. What were the relations between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the CPI?

A. No different from other Congress leaders. At every decisive moment he was with the right and belonged to them. He issued circulars against the Kisan Sabha. My department was abolished.

Q. What do you think of the 'Fundamental Rights' Resolution adopted at the Karachi Congress?

A. Happy. Not concrete enough. Too general. But in view of the compromise to be made by right wing leadership, it was meant to enlist the sympathy of common people for the struggle.

Q. Can you enlighten me as to the formation and activities of the London group of the CPI?

A. Yes. I was in touch with Saklatvala and B. P. C. P. at the time the CPI was organised. We organised the London Congress Committee and carried on intensive propaganda against the participants at the Round Table Conference, specially the communal elements. We also contacted Indian seamen in London. But our main activity was our own education in Marxism and anti-imperialism. The party was illegal and we could not function openly when we returned to India but we contacted the underground apparatus and put ourselves at its disposal.

Q. What literature did you read at that time?

A. We read Marxist classics – Marx, Engels and Lenin – supplemented by the writings of British communists like R. P. Dutt. We were also interested in some British radicals like Russell. I must confess however that our knowledge of Indian

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conditions was rather poor and our application of Marxism also mechanical. About the time I left England, one or two of us were influenced by Trotskite views. I myself was so naive that I took pains to contact Bukharin when he visited London. It is only when we came to India and participated in the anti-imperialist movement that our schooling in Marxism really began.

Q. Did you meet other Indian revolutionary groups abroad?
A. I met Chattopadhyaya in Berlin and had long talks with him.

I had already contacted Shaukat. I was familiar with Roy's writings. But somehow all these friends left me utterly unsatisfied with their analysis of actual conditions in India. They saw the bourgeois character of the national leadership but not the broadened base of anti-imperialism. Their whole emphasis lay on militant unionism, not on national liberation. As a result, by 1935 when the slogan of united anti-imperialism was accepted as the platform of the party, they forgot their old friends and when M. N. Roy came to India and joined the Congress, we found ourselves more in opposition to him than on his side.

Q. What are your views about M. N. Roy?
A. We took M. N. Roy as an agent of British imperialism. We learnt from the documents of the Third International that he had not only propounded the doctrine of decolonisation but also committed various serious errors in handling the Chinese revolution. I had occasion to meet Roy very often in the A. I. C. C. and apart from his petty-bourgeois stand on the whole question of Indian freedom he was so utterly egoistic and individualist that his followers, the so-called Royists, did not create any impression on the nationalist movement between 1936 and 1940. After 1940, his anti-fascism was just an apology for support of England and her allies in their war against Hitler.

Q. What do you know of the Randive period?
A. It is very difficult for me to pass judgement on Comrade Randive. His sectarian approach to the problem of Indian freedom and his unjustified criticism of the Chinese struggle are too well known to be repeated. What impressed me most was a certain clear class stand and a purism of personal life, which appeared to be a necessary corrective to our growing petty bourgeois trends and our individualism inside the party. Randive unlike many of us began his career with the organisation of the Bombay working class. He was a promising young economist when he joined the party. I had also occasion to see something of him in prison. While I have never supported his patent distortions of the party line, I have still a sneaking respect for the personal integrity and revolutionary fervour of Comrade Randive. This is why although his line was repudiated early in 1950–51, Comrade Randive was not thrown out of the party and is still a very valued cadre of the party.

Q. Did his line provide a corrective?
A. I have been out of touch. The new factor is the freedom of India and I feel that quite a number of our Comrades have been swept off their feet in the new situa-

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tion, by the new tactics of the Congress leadership. I mean their 5-year plans, some amount of civil liberty and the practice of some form of democracy as against the openly reactionary regime in Pakistan.

Q. What about the letter of Zhdanov?
A. Both day in and day out we found ourselves in a blind ally. We had started with the Telangana uprising and some action in other provinces but we were getting more and more isolated. On the other hand the Indian bourgeoisie was getting more and more strengthened. Comrade P. C. Joshi openly began criticism and forced an echo in many party ranks. At a later stage foreign comrades outside India could see our mistakes and came out with an open correction, but the initiative was taken in India and not outside. Criticism came out of our practice and not from mature understanding and theoretical thinking.

Q. What do you think of the 1934–1940 period?
A. I consider it the most fruitful period of the party when our links with broad masses of India through anti-imperialist struggle were strong. The party not only functioned among the workers and peasants as it had done before, but openly functioned in the A. I. C. C. in alliance with socialists and other radical elements. Besides it forged new links with the students, women and Indian States People's organisations and organised the I. P. T. A. and other cultural groups. I must admit that the initiative came from P. C. Joshi and from his experience, that he had the widest contacts with all the provinces, and new comrades felt inspired by his affection and guidance. One had to live in that period to see the dynamism of the organisation and our tremendous growth. It was comrade P. C. Joshi in fact who raised the party from an underground and conspiratorial little group to the status of a national party.

Q. Was the CPI not a middle class party then?
A. It started with a strong industrial base in cities. It is true, in the anti-imperialist struggle a lot of petty-bourgoisie, specially middle class intellectuals, joined the party but the party took care to look after their education both at the centre and in provincial headquarters. So our cadres kept on developing both at the level of practice and mass struggles and through theoretical education. I do not remember any glaring lapses in the discipline of the party. Our mistakes mainly arose from our immaturity in our judgment of the bourgeois leadership, both Congress and Muslim League, and our confusion mainly arose in the great crisis created by the war danger and the Congress-League conflict.

Q. How do you view the relations between the Muslim League and the CPI?
A. We were opposed to the League uncompromisingly until 1938, i. e. when there was some prospect of fighting British imperialism. I fully agree that the policy of sending comrades, although they were very few, inside the Muslim League was wrong in as much as the working class movement was not strong enough to in-

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fluence the policy of the Congress or the League; which only shows our defeatism and lack of faith in Marxism.

Q. What about Feroze?
A. Comrade Feroze was one of those who left India in pursuance of the Hizrat movement and like Shaukat and others returned from England a convinced Marxist. What is more, he joined the party and until the last moment of his life, he was unflinching in his loyalty to the party and utterly disciplined, even in the phase of Pakistan dictatorships after 1948. I had occasion to live with him in Deoli Camp. I can only testify to his indomitable courage and dedication to the party.

Q. Was he one of the founders?
A. Yes.

Q. What are your views on the Cabinet Mission?
A. I met Cripps in 1942, when he first came, sent out by Churchill, and I could quite see the extreme nervousness of British imperialism in the face of new developments. I could see from the experience of Cripps that he was fully acquainted with the character of our leadership, both Congress and Muslim League, and he went back fully satisfied that neither had anything in common with an honest and revolutionary anti-imperialist fighting organ. They were just colonial bourgeois organisations only too anxious to come to terms in the face of the rising anti-imperialist tempo of their masses. Towards the close of the war I could see the signs of a diabolical plot in East Punjab, Delhi and Rajputana when dumps of arms were created, the masses indoctrinated and mutual killings organised under the inspiration of British officers, feudal princes and landlords. The Muslim League had already started propaganda for Pakistan in 1940 and it was being continuously encouraged by Lord Wavell and the British cabinet. One can see the blueprints of these plots in Coupland's book.[3] They mention the Bombay naval rising and the country as a whole in support of Azad Hind Force. The leadership of the League and Congress were scared by these movements and suddenly the Cabinet Mission came. The rest of the story is too well known and can be seen in Maulana Azad's book. Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru supported partition. The initiative lay in the hands of the national leadership and not the CPI, and I do not see how we could have averted partition which was a conspiracy from beginning to end without any historical background except the British policy of encouraging communalism.

Q. Could Hindu-Muslim conflict be resolved?
A. I am afraid we do not realise the big difference in the composition of the Indian and the Muslim bourgeosie. The Muslim bourgeoisie had no oppositional rôle and

[3] Probably this refers to the book by R. Coupland, *Britain and India 1600–1947*, rev. ed., London, 1948. [H. K.]

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it was linked up both with feudal elements and British imperialism. If the Muslim bourgeoisie could be persuaded to invade Kashmir and otherwise openly attack our neighbour Afghanistan or go out of its way to support the Portuguese occupation of Goa, I do not see how the Indian bourgeoisie could conciliate it. Mr. Birla and Dalmia have still their industrial establishments in Pakistan. Mr. Dalmia in fact has constructed a very beautiful mosque to please the Pakistan Government. The Indian High Commission in Karachi has always moved the Pakistan bourgeoisie for the sake of trade concessions but the Pakistan bourgeoisie, acting under the imperialists' influence, have chosen to link themselves with non-Indian interests. For instance, they have trade in South Africa even though both Pakistan and India are openly opposed to the South Africa Government's policy of segregation. The Pakistan bourgeoisie in fact instead of developing a big industrial base is concentrating more and more on selling or processing consumer goods in partnership with foreigners. The whole character of the Pakistan bourgeoisie militates against independent bourgeois development which is the hallmark of the Indian bourgeoisie.

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